An Exploration of the Ogoni People's Resistance in Nigeria:
A Participatory Action Research Approach

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis first to Almighty God whose inspiration gave me understanding and the wisdom for completion. I dedicate it to my late brother and wife, Nelson & Eunice, my sister Juliana, and mother Esther. I love you all and it is your prayers from above that sustained my effort to become an accomplished Doctor of Sociology.

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List of Abbreviations

ADB	African Development Bank (South Africa)
AG	Action Group
ACPR	African Centre on Human and Peoples Rights
ANC	African National Congress (South Africa)
AIC	African Initiated Churches
AI	Amnesty International
AMS	Adivasi Mukti Sangathan (India)
BYF	Bayelsa Youth Federarion
BCM	Black Consciousness Movement (South Africa)
BHRG	British Parliamentary Human Rights Group
CBN	Central Bank of Nigeria
COR	Calabar-Ogoja-River
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade union
CWO	Catholic Women Organization
CMN	Change Movement Nigeria
CERD	Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
CRM	Civil Rights Movements
CWG	Chiswick Wildlife Group
COP	Council of Ogoni Professionals
COTRA	Council of Ogoni Traditional Rulers
DRC	Democratic republic of Congo
EDAG	Environmental Direct Action Group
EEZA	Exclusive Economic Zone Act
EYE	Egi Youth Federation
EMIRON	Ethnic Minority Rights Organization of Nigeria
ENC	Egbema National Congress
EiE	Enough Is Enough
ELF	Essence Lubricant France (French Oil)
FOE	Friends of the Earth
FOWA	Federation of Ogoni Women Association
GBM	Green Belt Movement
GT	Grounded Theory
HRW	Human Rights Watch
INC	Ijaw National Congress
IYC	Ijaw Youth Council
IYM	Ikwere Youth Movement
IRK	Islamic Religious Knowledge
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISA	Ideological State Apparatuses
KAGOTE	Khana, Gokana, Tai and Eleme
KMCS	Kededul Mazdoor Cehetna Sangath
LGA	Local Government Area
LUCHA	Lutte Pour Le Changement (DR Congo)
MOSOP	Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People
MORO	Movement for the Reparations of Ogbia
MOSIEN	Movement for the Survival of Itsekiri Ethnic Nationality
MAS	Movement Towards Socialism (Bolivia)

MEND	Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta
MRT	Movement Relevant Theory
MK	uMkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation) (South Africa)
ND	Niger Delta
NDC	Niger Delta Congress
NDA	Niger Delta Avengers
NDDC	Niger Delta Development Commission
NDPVF	Niger Delta People Volunteer Force
NUIM	National University of Ireland Maynooth
NLD	National League for Democracy
NYCOP	National Youth Council of Ogoni People
NUOS	National Union of Ogoni Students
NCNC	National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons
NP	National Party
NLD	National League for Democracy
NISOPEN	Nigerian Society for the Protection of Environment
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OBR	Ogoni Bill of Rights
OCC	Ogoni Council of Churches
OCU	Ogoni Central Union
OCU	Ogoni Central Unit
OCIA	Ogoni Central Indigenous Authority
ODU	Ogoni Divisional Unit
OF	Otherwordly Frame
ONA	Ogoni Native Assembly
ONOSUF	One Naira Ogoni Survival Fund
OSTRA	Ogoni State Representative Assembly
OSU	Ogoni Students Unions
OUT	Ogoni Teachers Union
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PAC	Pan African Congress
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SACP	South African Communist Party
PMLA	People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola
SPDC	Shell Petroleum Development Corporation
SRESC	Social Research Ethics Sub-Committee
SACP	South African Communist Party
UNDRIP	The Declaration on the Rights of indigenous People
TA	Thematic Analysis
TA	Tripartite Alliance
UN	United Nations
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIP	United National Independence Party
UNPO	Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization
UYM	Urhobo Youth Movement
WB	World Bank

WHO   World Health Organization
WTO   World Trade Organization
ZANU-PF   Zimbabwe African National Union- Patriotic Front

Acknowledgement

Abstract

This thesis focuses on the Ogoni minority ethnic group in Rivers State, which forms part of the Eastern Niger Delta, Nigeria. It explores the Ogoni people's struggle for survival by tracing the problems of the Ogoni to British colonial rule and its political effect on the minority groups in Nigeria and the post-colonial reality of maintaining equality between the majority ethnic groups and underprivileged minorities as the Ogoni people. The thesis explores the Ogoni's protest against Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) and the Nigerian government challenging the environmental degradation of their lands, and the reason behind the socio-economic and political marginalization of the people since the inception of oil extraction of oil and gas in 1958. The rights of Ogoni people to political and economic self-determination which they claim as their legal right and fair entitlements to proceeds of natural resources located within Ogoniland are key factors to the Ogoni struggle. The contribution of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People- MOSOP (as agency in this context) to achieve Ogoni self-rule within Nigeria is germane. Though a nonviolent movement, it continues to face the state's violent reaction against the entire Ogoni people - the climax being the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa (founder of MOSOP) and eight other Ogoni activists in 1995. The thesis draws heavily on Marxism and social movement studies; the idea of social movement from below pursued by grassroots groups who through locally-generated skills seek to challenge dominant structure of oppression. Rather than mainstream social movement theory, the research adopts movement relevant theory, which relies on activists' experience to explain the everyday struggles of the Ogoni people; how their collective nonviolent approach contributes to their fight for justice. To serve as an example to the Ogoni struggle, the thesis discusses the principled and pragmatic nonviolent paradigms of Mahatma Gandhi and Gene Sharp respectively. The research adopts a Participatory Action Research (PAR) methodology and draws on 33 qualitative semi-structured and focus group interviews and 9 participant observations across 5 kingdoms of Ogoni within the period of 5 months (plus 2 months of pilot). It includes a partially gendered-balanced cohort of individual Ogoni youth, students, activists, farmers, graduates, chiefs and those living in the city. The thesis is based entirely on primary material. Given the centrality of PAR, the research reflects on the PAR learning cycle; the iterative and participative action process that highlights the research constraints and provides an understanding as regards the research context. Apart from the academic knowledge gained, the egalitarian, iterative and relatively open-ended, sometimes serendipitous (Rudman et al. 2018) PAR process was beneficial for the Ogoni participants. As the research findings show, though the Ogoni's struggles seems stalled, their campaigns against Shell and the Nigerian State continues. The research is a learning process for the Ogonis and myself; hence it concludes with the recommendation to take the study further until justice is achieved.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Situating Research

Introduction

On November 10, 1995, Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other minority rights activists of the Ogoni[1] society were hanged, "after a blatantly unfair trial" (Amnesty International 2017) by General Sani Abacha's Nigerian military regime. Saro-Wiwa and the other eight were accused of involvement in murder, but in reality, had been put on trial for confronting the Anglo-Dutch oil corporation, Shell, over its devastating impact on the Ogoniland. Saro-Wiwa advocated for the rights of the Ogoni people in the Ogoni Bill of Rights (OBR), written by the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP)[2]; a grassroots social movement, known globally for its resistance against exploitation of their natural resource - oil. The brutal execution of the Ogoni 9 elicited worldwide condemnation and MOSOP has been widely cited by scholars and activists across the globe.

It is crucial to note that the strategy of the Nigerian government to silence the Ogoni movement by eliminating its leaders, the punitive raids on Ogoni villages, the indiscriminate shootings and killing of the Ogonis, arbitrary arrests and detention and rape cases has not succeeded in the last 25 years. This research explores Ogoni's persistent resistance amidst the sustained repressive tactics by the Nigerian state. It focuses on Ogoni's struggle against the socio-economic and political inequalities they face within the Nigerian state. To explore this, the research adopts the Participatory Action Research (PAR) methodology. This will allow me to learn from the Ogoni experience, which will serve as a toolkit for my future development work as a missionary priest.

Nigeria is a multi-ethnic society, and this can be traced to the historical distortions created by the colonial state. As argued in the thesis, colonialism laid the foundation for the injustice that stirs endless grievances across the complex entity called Nigeria.[3] The deliberate creation of ethnic blocs of three majority populations against hundreds of minority ethnic groups across the nation calls for a critical examination of how these minority groups will survive, when it is obvious that the

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[1] The name Ogoni refers to the indigenous people of that name, the language and also the land (Ogoniland) they inhabit within Rivers State, southeastern Nigeria.

[2] MOSOP is a mass-based social movement organization of the indigenous Ogoni people. It is an umbrella organization with 10 sub-bodies: The National Youth Council of Ogoni People (NYCOP), Ogoni Council of Churches (OCC); Council of Ogoni Traditional Rulers (COTRA); Ogoni Students Unions (OSU, secondary schools and below); National Union of Ogoni Students (NUOS - those in tertiary institutions); Ogoni Council of Churches (OCC); Ogoni Teachers Union (OUT); Federation of Ogoni Women Association (FOWA); Ogoni Central Union (OCU); Council of Ogoni Professionals (COP). Every community in Ogoni has chapters of MOSOP, who represent their community at the kingdom level. For the election of their leaders, the electoral process starts at the chapter level in the communities where leaders emerge. These leaders will then elect the kingdom leaders, and three persons from the affiliate (above) group and kingdoms elect the national leadership of MOSOP. MOSOP structure is made of the General Assembly of Ogoni people, the steering committee made of representatives from each of the affiliates with three representatives from each of the kingdom. The leadership is composed of 1 president, 1 deputy president, 8 vice presidents (representatives from the kingdoms), 1 secretary and assistant, 1 financial secretary, 1 treasurer, 1 publicity secretary and one legal adviser (See Haynes 1999; MOSOP- Ogoni Development Blueprint). With this explanation, I have used Ogoni and MOSOP interchangeably within the work, since MOSOP represent the interest of the Ogoni society. This is not to say that there are no dissenting voices explained later in the chapter. The kind of tension between individual and group interest associated to ethnic political mobilisation (see Isumonah 2004).

[3] Colonialism remains an important issue in Nigerian's development discourse. Various historical, conceptual, and empirical debates (see Ekeh 1975; Nnoli 2003; Osasghae 1995; Osaghae & Suberu 2005) provide strong link with colonialism and development and create plausible insights in understanding the socio-economic and political development in Nigeria since independence. They also inform the need for alternative development framework that would address Nigeria's post-independence marginalization strategies. I discuss this more fully in chapter 2.

colonial state left power with the elites of the three ethnic majority groups. It is general knowledge that the three majority ethnic groups have continued to preside over the state in a manner that has turned governance into gangsterism and total criminality through grabbing of the state resources to the detriment of the minority groups: as Kukah (2011), Osaghae (1998) and Nnoli (1980) have argued, these have turned state institutions into instruments of ethnic dominance. Being a member of a minority ethnic group in the country entails everyday struggle, given that the predatory and tyrannical state has reduced the minority groups to a state of degradation. The ruthless exploitation of oil in the Ogonis' ancestral homeland in the Niger Delta (see figure 1), which has had catastrophic consequences for their environment, society and livelihood, is a crucial example.
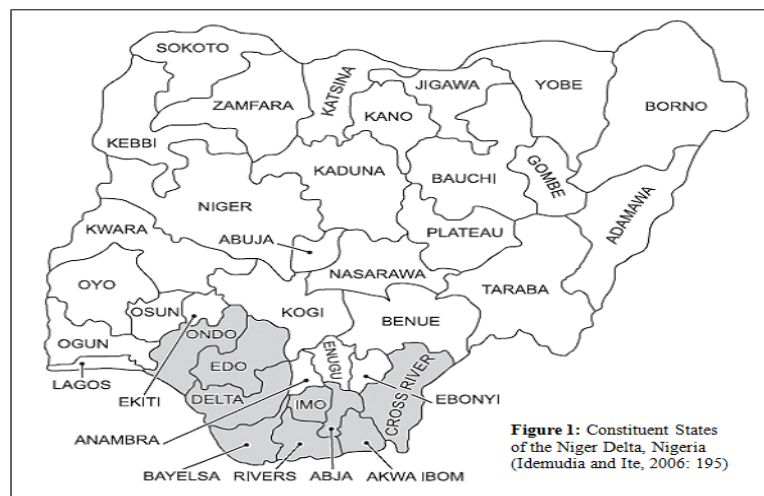
Figure 1: Map of Nigeria showing the Niger Delta states (source: https://www.e-ir.info/2009/06/10/shell-and-society-securing-the-niger-delta/). Ogoni is in Rivers state.

In the early 1990s, Ken Saro-Wiwa, the Ogoni "arrowhead" (Kukah 2011), mobilised the Ogoni society to nonviolently challenge their oppressed and marginalized conditions, which are made worse by the combined effort of the multinational oil company, Shell Petroleum Development Corporation (SPDC) and the Nigerian state.

Their demands were for autonomy[4] for the Ogoni people, a fair share of the proceeds of oil extraction, and remediation of environmental damage to Ogoni lands (see OBR 1990). While much has changed since Saro-Wiwa's execution, today's MOSOP is still the primary point of political identification for the vast majority of Ogoni and remains a central player in the conflict. The

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[4] This highlights the complex and deep-rooted relationship between ethnicity and federalism in Nigeria. The fear of ethnic domination in the context of zero-sum clientelist politics and the struggle for the control of political power, and of the enormous financial resources and patronage deriving from it, in an ethnicized Nigeria have caused ethnic groups to assert their collective group rights for home rule or self-government within the Nigerian federation through the creation of their own autonomous states. This is not about admitting a new state to the federation through territorial expansion but about creating a new state or states out of one or more existing ones (see Adele 2002). I have elaborated on this in chapter 2.

Ogoni's struggle against the state resonates with all the victims of injustices in the country. As Kukah (2011) argues, it offers an insight into the dynamics of minority politics in Nigeria.

Ogoni's resilience poses a major challenge to the government that insists on its rights and powers to suppress the people. Apart from the overwhelming presence of armed military men, Ogoniland experienced violent activities orchestrated by the government as a strategy to silence the people (Human Rights Watch 1995). Thus, in a country where civil struggles for political and economic emancipation[5] are viewed by the state as "militant movements", there is no doubt that the Ogoni struggle against inequalities has faced a daunting challenge in the last 25 years. However, the Ogoni struggle is able to articulate its grievances against what they referred to as illegitimate state control of proceeds from their oil.

Rationale for Selecting the Research: Context

The rationale for selecting this research is explained in two ways. The first highlights its importance in contributing to the area of social science research, and the second clarifies why PAR specifically was chosen as a methodology above other approaches.

The Important Place of Research

Arguably, there is no university library shelf in the world that has no thesis on the Niger Delta region as there are many research projects on the socio-economic and political circumstances of the region. It has been a location of interest to researchers, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and policy makers both national and international. Thus, it is difficult to argue against the idea that the Niger Delta is both a paradox of plenty and industrialization (Agbonifo 2009). The most prominent explanation for this paradoxical phenomenon is that the huge revenues from the oil and gas taken from Ogoniland generate developmental outcomes such as increased poverty, socio-economic inequalities and environmental degradation.

However, there has been less attention given to the unique struggle of the Ogoni, especially on the nonviolent mobilization ethical template instantiated by Ken Saro-Wiwa. Though social justice issues sometimes have been questioned because of the uncertainties over their meaning, this research explores strategies of nonviolent resistance and capacity building in Ogoni, using the PAR approach which shows how giving voice to the experiences of the Ogoni population could catalyze

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[5] The Cambridge Dictionary defines emancipation as the "process of giving people social or political freedom and rights". In the context of this thesis, my use of the term emancipation is not different from the definition above. This agrees with Stavenhagen (1996), who compared self-determination with the concept of "emancipation" which he says was just as powerful an *idée force* as self-determination is today. Thus, emancipation pertained to the oppressed, the excluded, the downtrodden, etc. Thus, Ogoni's struggle their oppressed situation.

a collective response towards change. Utilizing semi-structured and focus group interviews and participant observation research methods, I explore the essential issues that are relevant to my research questions.

Rationale from a Personal Angle: Myself and my voice
If the starting point of every research work is informed by the researcher's worldview (Reason & Bradbury 2007), it is not a surprise that my interest in this research grew out of my socio-economic and political background. As Austin & Sutton (2014) submit, one's special location facilitates the process of studying reality because it is the point where one makes sense, understands, interprets and articulates realities. Thus, locating oneself in the research is important because it helps the readers to understand that the personal is always political (Lorde 1984). For Collins (2000), finding oneself in research is not only reflexive but also reveals undesired truths that expose the feelings of the researcher. Hence, my choice to talk about myself, my context and what brings me to this research is not just about revealing my desire for self-emancipation but a call for socio-economic and political emancipation of the Ogoni and other minority groups in Nigeria.

I am a Nigerian from Benue State (from the Tiv[6] ethnic group) but I was born in the North-Kano State; a Muslim dominated environment where religion and ethnic identity issues were part of our daily conversations. Also, I am a Catholic religious missionary priest who has worked in different socio-cultural, economic and political contexts with vulnerable, oppressed, deprived and marginalized people both at home (mostly in the North) and abroad (mostly in Ireland). Consequently, my background may arouse in my reader the curiosity as regards my choice for this research. I address this from three angles.

First, I am neither from any of the core Northern states nor from the Ogoni ethnic group. The major question and common curiosity of my research participants, which I had to deal with throughout the research process and those I discussed my research with is: why do you choose to study the Ogoni people? I cannot emphasize more the disappointment expressed by the majority of Tiv people who felt there are more research topics in Tivland than my choice of Ogoni. This reaction reveals the feelings, especially, of minority groups and their relationship with the state. However, while the research is on Ogoni and particularly the approach of the Ogoni movement, the analysis takes a broader perspective of how resistance can operate and why nonviolent resistance to seeking justice is the best approach.

Secondly, I am a non-native English speaker and the research was carried out in a non-native English speaking environment. One may argue that English is our third language since the Nigerian

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[6] Tiv is an ethnic group found in Benue State- the North Central region of Nigeria. The Tiv people speak the Tiv language and constitute approximately 3.5% of Nigeria's population and number about 6.5 million people. They depend on agricultural produce for commerce and life. Retrieved: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tiv_people (accessed 15/03/19).

Pidgin is adopted as a lingua franca; hence there is the possibility of some expressions that may be difficult to read. However, I have tried to give clarity where necessary. And thirdly, I was born and raised outside my own culture within the country where the idea of ethnic and religious supremacy is perpetuated by one of the majority Hausa-Fulani ethnic group; this engenders feelings of alienation and oppression. It is important to highlight this, because it could create, especially for researchers, an embedded position that questions research validity.

Although one cannot deny completely the sociable nature of some locals, it mattered growing up if one was a Muslim or a Christian; and being able to speak the local Hausa language made interactions with the local people much easier. I claim that this had something to do with Nigeria's colonial experience which led to the Nigerian Civil War (1967-70), seven years after independence. Most of the literature argues that it was due to political interests, but on the other hand, some maintain that religious and ethnic interests were the major underlying themes (Nnoli 1980; Kukah 1993). Opeyemi and Odukoya (2016) contend that the conflict was about control of state power. The experience has left a lasting impression on citizens who struggle with the idea of ethnic and national identity.[7]

Even though I had a good command of the Hausa language, the struggle of living in an environment where one is considered serious only if he professes the Muslim faith left me in a difficult position. Discrimination ruled every sphere of life. For example, the school enrolment system favoured Muslim children over Christian. Since it was easy to identify people's religious affiliation by their names, we (Christians) had to change and bear Muslim names[8] before we got admitted into schools and it was compulsory to study the Islamic Religious Knowledge (IRK) subject.

Obviously, non-Muslim parents faced difficult choices for having their children educated in the north. I also saw a system of social relations that had fewer women in managerial positions as compared to men. Thus, social relations were structured along the lines of class, gender, religion and ethnicity, which was not simply about social identity but for power and privilege. Then I had no

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[7] In the Richard constitution of 1946 and McPherson constitution of 1956, Nigeria was defined as a tripartite system with the hegemonic control of three ethnic groups namely Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo. In that definition, it was supposed that, (although erroneously and falsely) the northern region was Hausa/Fulani, the eastern Igbo and the western region Yoruba. But we all know from our historical experiences and identities that there are ethnic groups in the north that are neither Hausa nor Fulani; it is also misleading and false to assume that every ethnic group from the eastern region is of Igbo extraction (See Mathews 2002 and Udogu 2005). With the experience of the aforementioned Civil War, which cannot be explained without looking at the colonial arbitrary lines and tactics of divide and rule, there are prejudices amongst citizens such that individuals are boxed into a certain category by the fact that they are from a particular region. For example, you are automatically a Muslim if you identify with the North and a Christian if you say you are from the South. However, it is necessary to state that the composition of the country goes beyond North and South. The country has a total population of 204,296,013 people (see: worldometers- https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/nigeria-population/ accessed 24/02/20), with 774 Local Governments Areas in the 37 states including the Federal capital. The best description that covers the entire population at present are the six geopolitical zones- North-Central, North-West, North-East, South-South, South-East and South-West, with each hosting not less than 5 states.
[8] It must be noted that changing of names was an easy task for Christians since almost all Christian Biblical names have their equivalents in the Quran.

idea what this meant, but as I think about it now, I feel it is necessary to confront the dominant socio-cultural, economic and political injustices within which my research is located.

These experiences have encouraged me to not only to tell the stories about the plight of the oppressed and exploited people but to create an environment or the opportunity for us to tell our own stories for the purpose of finding solutions. I believe that people's voices matter; that their rich experiences count; and that the force that they might bring to a narrative is valuable, considering that issues of oppression and marginalization do not occur in isolation but are an indication of something that could be happening in our homes, in the society and politically at a national level.

Although I am a Nigerian, I had never been to Ogoniland. My first encounter with the Ogoni story, especially concerning the formation of MOSOP and death of Ken Saro-Wiwa, was from the literature I read during my research for my Master's programme in International Development. I was fascinated by the tragic story of the oil-rich Ogoni society, which must be examined from the point of view of Ogoni's relationship with the Nigerian government. Being a member of one of the minority ethnic groups in the country, the Ogoni story resonated with me. I wondered why an ethnic group would be subjected systematically to such a level of brutality by its own government. These thoughts came to my mind:

1. That I am also a member of a marginalised ethnic group in Nigeria.

2. The experience of my late mother (like the many African women still struggling out there) who fought for justice in her matrimonial home all her life but never succeeded.

3. How I have been through similar experiences in my priestly vocation and as I interact with the world. Mostly, it makes me sometimes feel very vulnerable and with the feeling that "nobody likes me".

4. My encounter with so many marginalized people in the last thirteen years as a missionary priest.

5. My involvement and experience of trying to understand and work with people in difficult situations.

The points above reaffirm my choice of the PAR methodology, which involves persons that are directly affected by the problem being researched through finding facts, taking action, and using reflection that ultimately leads to a need for further inquiry and action to change (Minkler 2000).

Among the contextual issues relevant to my research is the fact that I, as a Nigerian and researcher, could potentially bring certain biases and prejudices into this research. However, the fact that I am aware of the possibility of bringing my personal biases, which are mostly from my commitment to

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issues of justice, knowledge creation, empowerment and freedom, in my opinion helps to minimise any potential negative influence. Griffiths (1998) acknowledges the importance of bias in research when he says that having ethical and political positions are inevitable, but not acknowledging them is the issue. Thus, acknowledgement help unmasks any bias implicit in those views and also helps to provide a way of responding critically and sensitively to the research.

Further on the issue of neutrality, Griffiths argues that a stance on neutrality can be misleading. It would almost be impossible to achieve as every researcher is approaching the research from a particular perspective. As such, I contend that foregrounding one's personal stance can result in a reduction of the effects of bias. I am confident to state that continuous reflection on my action in the course of this research helped me to maintain a critical stance, which contributes to ensuring a balanced perspective.

Delimitation of the Scope of the Research

This research explores the socio-economic and political inequalities in Ogoni, and the Ogoni nonviolent social mobilization established by Ken Saro-Wiwa. The most significant point for this thesis is on the rights of Ogoni people to political and economic self-determination[9], which they claim is their legal right and fair entitlements from the benefits from natural resources within their land.

Ogoni has more than 100 oil wells and a number of flow lines, manifolds and flow stations, which constitute Nigeria's main source of foreign revenue. In addition to these production facilities, a number of oil export trunk lines pass through the community. It is acknowledged nationally that the natural blessings (crude oil and natural gas) found in Ogoni and other communities in the Niger Delta[10] area have generated massive wealth for the nation (Central Bank of Nigeria- CBN 2012). For instance, the industrial sector contributed 41.5 percent of Nigeria's GDP for the period 1990 to 2012, while crude petroleum and natural gas contributed about 91 percent of the industrial sector GDP during this period (CBN 2012).

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[9] On the concept of self-determination, the UN Charter gives two meanings: "First, a state is said to have the right of self-determination in the sense of having the right to choose freely its political, economic, social, and cultural systems. Second, the right to self-determination is defined as the right of a people to constitute itself in a state or otherwise freely determine the form of its association with an existing state" (see Article 1, paragraph 2; and Article 55, paragraph 1. Retrieved: https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/ctc/unchater.pdf accessed 18/05/21). In this thesis, my use of the self-determination draws from the second explanation above. As an indigenous minority group in Nigeria, the Ogoni struggle is about their right to determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development within Nigeria as I explained about autonomy. Also, it is important to note their strategy of joining Unrepresented Nations & Peoples Organization (UNPO), which facilitate the voices of unrepresented and marginalized nations and peoples worldwide (UNPO: Ogoni. Retrieved: https://unpo.org/members/7901 accessed 18/05/21). According to Shivji (1989), since self-determination is now enshrined as a universal human right, it is particularly relevant to colonised peoples.

[10] The "political" Niger Delta encompasses the physical Niger Delta and all other Nigerian states where oil production takes place- Abia, Akwa-Ibom, Cross River, Edo, Imo and Ondo. See Figure 1 above).

Although the bulk of the oil, which is Nigeria's main source of revenue, is derived from their lands, the Ogoni people are one of the most politically marginalized groups in the country.[11] This led to Ogoni demands for a more equitable and privileged treatment of oil-producing Ogoni minority community to redress power imbalances in the federation which make them subordinate to the majority groups. As the research shows, this cannot be examined outside Ogoni struggle through MOSOP for the purpose of actualising their self-identification and self-determination. The contribution of MOSOP as a strategy to achieve justice is a relevant theme in this research.

As argued subsequently, the experience of the Biafran war made the action taken by MOSOP for Ogoni self-determination[12] in Nigeria highly suspicious. Among other people within the country, it creates some reactions which can be positive or negative depending on the perspective the actions and reactions are analyzed within. There are numerous violent movements within the Niger Delta, such as Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND), Niger Delta Avengers (NDA), Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF), Niger Delta Frontier Force (NDFF) etc. all mobilizing their activities and directing their energy in fighting for justice.

They all claim their agenda is to expose the exploitation, oppression and devastation of their natural environment, caused by the Nigerian Government and the oil corporations. As opposed to MOSOP,

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[11] Many Ogoni communities remain geographically isolated and inaccessible by their terrain due to poor road conditions and the necessity of water transportation. The government's neglect of transportation infrastructure creates weak links to the government and a limited sense of belonging. For those who reside in slums, such as in Port Harcourt, beyond their traditional geographical home, these populations' vulnerabilities intersect with insecure property rights and other forms of discrimination.
On the issue of resource allocation, the federal government has used this broader concept of Niger Delta for administering compensations for the negative effects of oil production. Political agitation and militant attacks in the physical Niger Delta led to the creation of the Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC), and its successor, the Ministry of Niger Delta and Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) (LeVan 2018). However, the impact has been limited. Oil exploitation, which accounts for up to 90 percent of Nigeria's export revenue, produces significant negative externalities that shape how the people of the region see the federal government and external partners. First, pollution of land and rivers has jeopardized sources of livelihood. Between 2006 and 2016, there were 9,343 documented spills. Since the discovery of oil more than a half century ago, the equivalent of one Exxon Valdez spill occurs each year in the Niger Delta (Watts 2018). Second, mass mobilization and democratic channels have been unable to reform the distribution of oil rents with a revenue allocation formula that adequately compensates for oil's negative externalities. The current formula involves a "vertical" distribution that allocates a fixed percentage to the federal, state and local governments, and then a horizontal distribution that allocates across states according to population, size, developmental needs and other criteria. In addition, there is a "derivation principle" which stipulates that 13 percent of revenue from a commodity (such as oil) which the federal government has control of should be returned to the state of origin (Suberu 2001). The implication here is that the region that is by far the country's biggest revenue earner gets less with the principles of population and equality of states weighted 50 percent each, in the sharing of the less than the 40 percent balance of oil revenues, in inter-state and inter-local government allocation. Not only have farming and fishing, which is the major occupations of the Ogoni minority been decimated, their territory has continuously lacked basic infrastructure and amenities - electricity, roads, schools, hospitals, portable water, etc. The region remains the poorest, due largely to the ecologically unfriendly exploitation of oil and state policies that expropriate the Ogoni of their rights to their natural resources (Quaker-Dokubo 2000; Ebegbulem, Ekpe, & Adejumo 2013).
[12] According to Przetacznik (1990:49) the right to self-determination of peoples and nations is a basic collective human right which is recognized and guaranteed by the norms and principles of international law. Shivji (1989:99) remarked that the African Charter on Human and People's Rights confines the right to political self-determination ('external') to colonial, non-self-governing countries. There is, therefore, no right of oppressed nations within the sovereign states to secede. Territorial integrity is upheld at all cost. 'In effect, then, Article 20 (l) gives sovereign states the right to self-determination, while Article 29 seems to deny this right to communities within sovereign states'. Serious economic exploitation, political inequality, the denial of equitable share of economic resources taken from Ogoniland are some of the problems that have triggered Ogoni peoples demand for self-determination. Ogoni people are of the view that mobilizing politically for self-determination and taking on the dominant power institutions is the best way their participation and interest in Nigeria can be secured. However, the relationship between the Nigerian state and Ogoni people on the issue of self-determination is best described as polar opposites (Abdusalam 2016) given that the state in Africa is literally strewn with grievous violations of rights as observed by Shivji (1989).

these threaten and respond fiercely to the Nigerian military forces attacks within the region. They conduct raids, engage in oil thefts, as well as kidnappings of government and oil workers in the region, leading to complete lack of order and lawlessness in the region.[13] Since violence (such as vandalizing the oil pipelines) has been their mode of contention for goal attainment, there has been more damage and suffering caused rather than facilitate their objectives and protect their political interests through collective nonviolent actions like the approach adopted by MOSOP. Thus, the Ogoni approach presents the opportunity for different kinds of strategy in the Niger Delta region.

Research Objectives

What motivated me to undertake this research was a desire to explore the plight of the Ogoni people, a poor and socially marginalized group that has experienced oppression for many years. Given that social marginalization and exclusion are the key issues in relation to the Ogoni's poverty problems, how they have responded to the oppressive structure is largely the purpose of this inquiry. The Ogoni nonviolent struggle is a major point for this research, as it offers the opportunity for me to learn from their experience in order to make it a powerful case study for the study of social movements in Nigeria and beyond.

The research examines the ongoing relationship between the Ogonis and the Federal government of Nigeria in order to establish MOSOP as Ogoni's political mobilization tool for self-emancipation, its contribution to the Ogoni struggle and the factors militating against its activities. It explores the need for the Ogoni people to be aware, to reflect and take actions against the state power embedded within social structures; a collective problem that requires concerted solution to address especially as majority interests intersect with those of the indigenous minorities. The research will contribute to our understanding of the Ogoni situation and the larger issues of minority politics in Nigeria.

Research Questions

As established in the preceding sections, Ken Saro-Wiwa's agitation was premised on nonviolent action. Following the state's violent repression of MOSOP and the reassertion of dominant social relationships, which failed to meet the interests of the local Ogoni population, there is a need to

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[13] Amaechi's (2013) sociological analysis of how MEND emerged in the Niger Delta provides a clear picture as regards the emergence of these political violent movement in the Niger Delta. He looks at the interaction between the Nigerian government and the groups over the years, as well as the role it has played in the escalation of violence and the kind of militancy that evolved. Arm resistance started when the Nigerian government intensified its approach in the violent crack downs of the non-violent resistance at the dawn of democracy. Literally, governments' persistent as regards militarization of the region for the protection of the oil companies led the region into violent resistances. Government forces allegedly abused and killed members of the communities or youths with no apparent links to the group involved to the resistance movements. The government forces are accused of other human right abuses such as extra-judicial killings, rape and burning of homes during security raids of communities where the resistances are more persistent caused these communities to resort to ways to protect themselves.

examine the Ogoni's current reaction to the violent approach of the government. To achieve this, the research focuses on alternatives to the existing violent reactions through these research questions:

1. What is the response of Ogoni to the current socio-economic and political injustices in Ogoniland?

2. What strategies can lead Ogoni to a renewed enthusiasm for constructive social action?

3. How can Ogoni activists create new opportunities and capacity for self-development and self-determination[14]?

4. What does a PAR approach have to offer the Ogoni resistance[15]?

Significance of the Research

The research seeks to contextualize its findings in relation to existing studies. It seeks to look back on the legacy of Ken Saro-Wiwa in terms of the possibility for nonviolent resistance in Ogoni. Adopting the PAR approach, the findings will empower Ogoni activists who through grassroots mobilization seek to emancipate their society from social, economic and political marginalization.

The findings of this research will contribute significantly to several other key areas. As a PAR study, it will show how people's participation and engagement can bring about social change. Part of my motivation for this research comes from my personal experience working with rural underdeveloped or marginalized communities. The research will be a resource for the practices of community development, particularly with respect to socially marginalized communities.

I hope that the research result will inspire other marginalized minority groups in the country to challenge the dominant power of states through nonviolent paradigms. It will help to understand how power relations between Ogoni and other minority ethnic groups within the national domain

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[14] On the idea of self-development, I draw from Mead's idea of the "self". That is, "a person's distinct identity that is developed through social interaction." He argues that in order to engage in this process of "self," one has to be able to view him or herself through the eyes of others. So, we become self-aware when we look at ourselves from the perspective of the "other." Thus, self-reflection links developmental change in the ways in which the person constructs his or her own development over the life span. Obviously, both self-development and self-determination require a person to be free and willing to make their own decisions. Examining participants reaction to their social reality, it is fair to say that the Ogoni people are concerned about how others in the country view them. The idea here is how they will be able to develop, understand and learn from their current social situation in order to facilitate their ability to make choices and decisions on their own accord and to exercise control over themselves, and to set goals that develop their skills that enhance their struggle for justice. The Ogoni social reality presents the opportunity for different kinds of study, focusing on the gross inequalities created by oil exploration, the research emphasizes empowerment. That is, mobilizing the self-help efforts.

[15] Resistance in this research means Ogoni's act of using social mobilization approach against government oppression. And since the PAR methodology is democratic in nature, as I explained in chapter 3, my use of it in this context is not to advance PAR analytical or theoretical understanding, but to show how it has helped the Ogoni activists to address the underlying transformative and social action principles. This is the case because PAR has increasingly been seen as a means to illuminate, foreground, and act upon issues and problems related to struggles for social justice (MacDonald 2012). It is important to note that the PAR methodology created the space for counter narratives. See the propaganda issue discussed in chapter 5.

interacts, and what factors account for the failure to translate indigenous political mobilization at national level into concrete benefits locally. This research will be an important resource for many actors involved in development studies, NGOs, government policy makers for social change.

The Ogoni

Introduction

This section provides the background for understanding the relationship between the literature on Ogoni and how it helps to understand their nonviolent struggle for justice. Relying on Isumonah (2004) and Kpone-Tonwe's (1987) analysis of the Ogoni socio-cultural traditions, it looks at the origin of the Ogoni ethnic group and how their encounter with colonialism and post-independence relationship with the state has shaped the Ogoni identity within Nigeria. My use of the word "Ogoniland" in the entire thesis refers to the entire six kingdoms, and then community and village are used interchangeably, especially for locations within the kingdoms where the research took place. I also use 'state' and 'Federal government' interchangeably.

The Origin of Ogoni

Geographically, Ogoniland is located on the coast of the Gulf of Guinea and is the sixth largest geographical area in the South-East region of Nigeria. Ogoni is one of the fifteen ethnic groups in Rivers State, located to the east of Port Harcourt city. It is located between longitude 7°10' and 7°30'E and latitude 4°30' and 4°50'N. The area lies within the tropical region with all its climatic and topographic characteristics.

As it is common with many African ethnic groups, there are no written documents or analyzed archaeological evidence for exploring the origins of Ogoni (Kpone-Tonwe 1987). This means that most accounts on the origins of a particular indigenous African society are a mixture of oral tradition and comparisons with other related cultures (Jones 2000; Kpone-Tonwe 1987). There are two types of myths associated with Ogoni beginnings[16]: autochthony and migration. The former, which is less commonly mentioned, credits the founding of the Ogoni to another realm while the latter, which is more credible and widely referenced as it is supported by historical evidence, regards *Nama*[17] as the Ogoni's ancestral cradle land.

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[16] See figure 2
[17] The first village that was formed by the Ogoni people is called *Nama* in the Ogoni kingdom of Keh Khana (Kpone-Tonwe 1987).

11
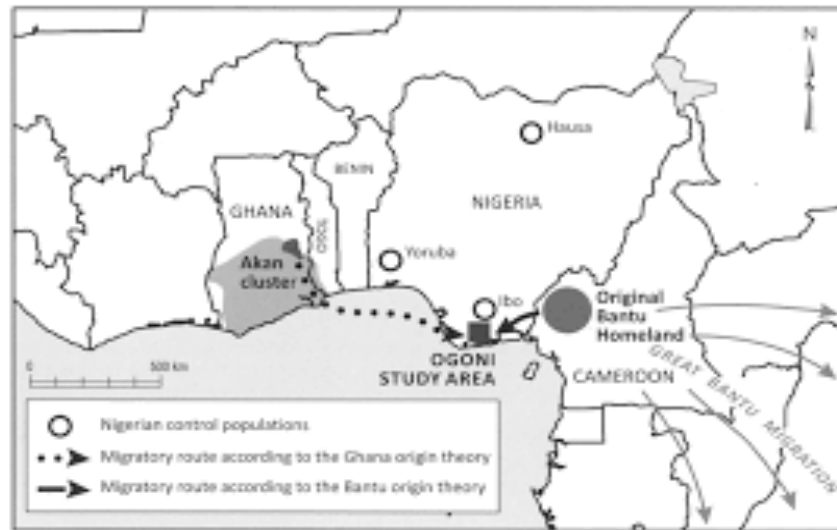
Figure 2: Map of West Africa showing Nigeria and the location of Ogoni. It shows the migratory routes of Ogoni according to the two contending theories of origin (Source: Jaja et al. 2011*).*

According to oral tradition, the expansion of the Ogoni from *Nama* involved conquest and incorporation of indigenous settlers, which could be because of unrestricted access to social and political mobility in the Niger Delta during the period of acquisition and control over specific territories by formative groups (Isumonah 2004). Kpone-Tonwe (1987) observes that there was war and rivalry between geographically neighbouring villages over control of land and trade routes.[18] As argued by Ajayi (2000:261), African "myths of origin usually refer not to the origin of peoples or linguistic groups as of state structures and dynasties," but essentially to the power relations of conquest and integration of diverse peoples.

The account from the western part of the country says that the Ogoni migrated from Ghana and first settled in Bonny and then moved over to the current location. The eastern version, on the other hand, states that Ogoni migrated from the east through Ibibio[19] territory across the Imo River in southeastern Nigeria. Kpone-Tonwe (1987) observes that the linguistic similarity of the Ogoni and Ibibio languages and the languages of the border areas of Cameroon, and the fact that the Ogoni group of languages belong to the same Benue-Congo sub-family of Niger-Congo languages, lend credibility to this account.

The groups enjoyed autonomy in parallel, through similar social, economic and political institutions and cultural and religious practices. Notable commonalities were the custom of protecting villages by deep trenches and the use of a five-day week, unlike the four and eight-day weeks of the Ibibio

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[18] In their article *The Legacy of Historical Conflict: Evidence from Africa*, Besley & Reynal-Quero (2014) examine the legacy of recorded conflicts in Africa in the precolonial period between 1400 and 1700, which they claim explain the recent experience of civil conflict and political violence on the continent both between and within countries. They show how historical conflict is correlated with a greater prevalence of postcolonial conflict, and how historical conflict is correlated with lower levels of trust, a stronger sense of ethnic identity, and a weaker sense of national identity across countries. The article demonstrates in clear terms how the history of conflict in Africa does not begin with colonialism and its legacy.
[19] A coastal people from Akwa Ibom, Cross River State, Southern Nigeria.

and Igbo clans (Kpone-Tonwe 2001). Ogoni had the *yaa* rite of passage that brings youth into adulthood. It served as an instrument of both social stratification and political recruitment of the virgin male youth. Also, the *Kpankpaan* secret society was an important political force and law enforcement agency. Interestingly, there is no mention of females, which relates to the Ogoni patriarchal system.

Ogoni occupy the mainland coast of South-Eastern Nigeria between the Imo and the Bonny Rivers, and are culturally and linguistically distinct. Their social organisation was based on class distinctions, with success in agriculture as the chief means of social mobility. Ogoniland is an agricultural region. The climate is generally humid with equatorial rainforest type vegetation. Before British colonial rule, Ogoni as an indigenous people had a well-established social system that placed great value on their socio-economic wellbeing. Living on a fertile alluvial soil and blessed with a necklace of rivers and creeks, they utilized the opportunity of having these resources to become great fishermen[20] and farmers[21] producing not only for their own subsistence but also for their neighbours in the Niger Delta. Ogoni was appropriately referred to as the *Food Basket* of the Eastern Niger Delta.

They created a system of agriculture; their traditional means of livelihood ensured the sustainable management and exploration of natural resources (Saro-Wiwa 1992). Ogoni controlled the long-distance trade of the Eastern Niger Delta in pre-European times. Trade routes linked the hinterland to market towns on the coast of Ogoni. The main items of trade consisted salt and sea foods and the medium of exchange was an iron currency. The ancient Ogoni regarded the acquisition of domestic slaves as a mark of social distinction (Kpone-Tonwe 1987).

The Ogoni people have a tradition and custom that is deeply rooted in nature and this helped them to protect and preserve their environment for generations. Rivers and streams, apart from being their source of water, are also intricately bound up with the life of the community as the ecosystems are central to their culture, religion and identity and are not to be desecrated. The Ogoni traditions revolve around honouring the land, which is considered to be a god according to their system of beliefs (Saro-Wiwa 1992). Grave consequences follow any erring human conduct or action polluting the environment. To them, their lives are inextricably bound up with the survival of the environment. Hence, their pre-colonial social system ensured sustainable exploration of natural resources and protection of biodiversity.

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[20] Good in harvesting seafood like fish, oysters, periwinkles and snails.
[21] Cultivating yams and plantains which they claim were domesticated by their ancestors, constitute the main crops.

Ogoni cultural settings

The Ogoni people live in close-knit rural communities. Ogoniland consists of six kingdoms: Babbe, Leme (Eleme), Gokana, Ken-Khana, Nyo-Khana, and Tee (Tai)[22].
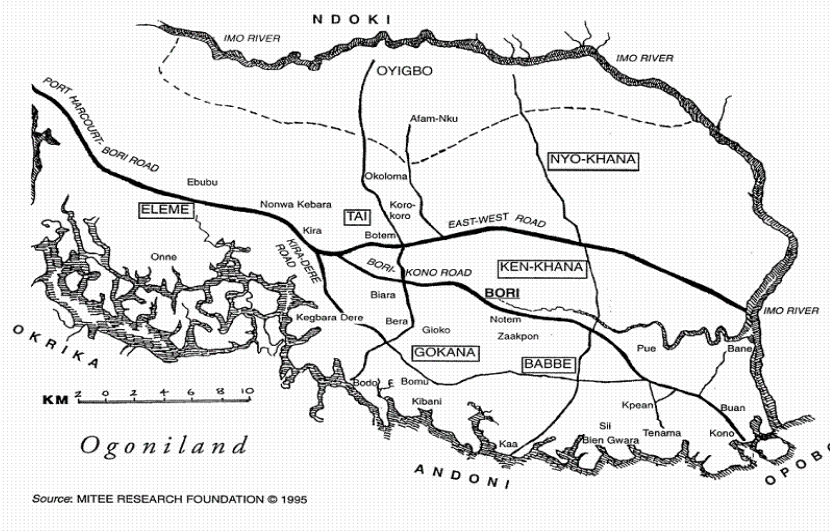
Figure 3: Map of Ogoni showing the six kingdoms (Source: Ujoh & Ifatimehin 2014*).*

However, some members of the Eleme kingdom deny any link to an Ogoni political community and distance themselves from the other Ogoni kingdoms (Ikoro 1996). It is worth noting that during my six months field experience in 2018, I came across some members of the Eleme kingdom who self-identify as Eleme rather than Ogoni. Also, Eleme did not sign the Ogoni Bill of Rights that was composed by Ken Saro-Wiwa and other members of MOSOP. Nevertheless, *Nama* oral tradition reports a conference of all extant Ogoni groups including each of the kingdoms mentioned above (Kpone-Tonwe 1987; Isumonah 2004).

From a linguistic point of view, Wolff (1959) classified the Ogoni language into three-Khana, Gokana and Eleme. Khana can be further sub-divided into three dialects: Tai, Northern Khana and Southern Khana, which is the standard Khana. This is crucial, as Wolff (1959) noted that the division of the Ogoni language into different dialects initially posed obstacles to community organising.[23] The Khana language is spoken by the largest number of Ogoni population, and it is spoken in the eastern half of the territory. Gokana is spoken in the west-central part of Ogoni division, while the Leme language is spoken in the western area. All three languages are inter-related, but they are all distinct from all the other languages spoken in the area.

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[22] See figure 3

[23] In their article *Razed, Repressed and Bought off: The Demobilization of the Ogoni Protest Campaign in the Niger Delta,* Demirel-Pegg and Pegg (2015:659) explained how language was a key strategy Saro-Wiwa used to reach out to the Ogoni masses. That, he "… speak to them in their own local languages and dialects". It means that Saro-Wiwa learnt and spoke the different Ogoni dialects, which apparently was a rare quality for Ogoniland leaders, and it captivated several people (Saro-Wiwa 1995a:11).

Although Eleme is considerably different from Khana and Gokana, Kpone-Tonwe (1990) argues there is a lexicostatistical comparison that supports a cognate relationship among them. Speakers of all three languages acknowledge close linguistic and ethnic relationship and emphasize their distinctness from other linguistic groups in areas such as Ibo, Ibibio and Andoni[24] (Wolff 1959). Other evidence of historical affinity is incidence of placenames, common traditional offices such as *Gbenemene* - king and *Lah-Bue* - chief minister (Isumonah 2004). Ogoniland is managed by traditional chiefs, where each kingdom is ruled by a *Gbenemene*.

Ogoni Religion

The ancient Ogoni people were highly spiritual. The spirit-mediums played vital roles in the society. From the ruler and his chiefs to the ordinary man on the street, all depended on the services of spirit-mediums for their important problems. No major undertakings were embarked upon without first consulting the ancestral spirit with rituals and sacrifices and with petitions asking support and guidance[25]. Hence, the ancient religion of the Ogoni, which still flourishes, is centred on a deep belief in a supreme and all-powerful unseen Being - *Bari* - who created the universe and everything in it. They believe this all-powerful being created man and sent him into the world (Badey 2000; Kpone-Tonwe 1987).

The supreme spirit is believed to be a feminine being,[26] the mother of all creation. She is called *Waa Bari* Ogoni and the title *Waa Bari* makes her distinctive. She sits in her domain to control and direct all that she had created; to order what should be and what should not be; to protect her people in war; to induce rain[27]; to fail and save lives during epidemics; and to control infant mortality (Badey 2000).[28] The Ogoni religious and military system included the award of titles, the highest of which is the basis of ancestral spirit possession among the Ogoni.

In 1908, the first Christian mission came to Gokana and a station was established in Bodo[29] (Badey 2000). Despite the introduction of Christianity, many aspects of the indigenous Ogoni culture and religion are still evident. Ogoni is endowed with a large variety of cultural practices, which includes

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[24] One of the minority ethnic groups in Rivers State

[25] See Saro-Wiwa 1992

[26] The notion that *Waa Bari*- the Supreme Spiritual Creator- was feminine may stem from the fact that only women are endowed with and equipped for the actual bringing into the world the new child in the procreation of the living organism which develops into a foetus which is latter born as a baby, a new human being to replenish the race. It is the woman who carries the new creature in her body, unaided for a period of nine months or more as some children never mature until twelve months and it is she who must suffer all the pangs of a painful labour to bring it out to the world. In this way, the creator being was regarded as female and as the all-powerful mother (Badey 2000).

[27] A belief in most African culture- associated with fertility.

[28] The Ogoni belief in *Waa Bari* is echoed in most of Ken Saro-Wiwa's writings. The idea that she protects all Ogoni in time of war was is so much connected with the Ogoni struggle, expressed in Agbonifo's The Otherworldly frame (OF) framing (see Agbonifo 2019). In line with his ancestral belief, Saro-Wiwa was convinced *Waa Bari* was on the side of the Ogoni to aid them to defeat their oppressors (Saro-Wiwa 1992).

[29] One of the communities in Gokana Kingdom

masks and masquerades, human figure representation of the ancestors. These are used in *Ka-elu*[30] performances and the puppet shows, which are performed exclusively by the *Amanikpo*[31]. Kpone-Tonwe (1987; 1990) explains that the festival is held to commemorate the founding of the villages, to pay allegiance to particular ancestral land[32] or water spirits, to mark the planting and harvesting seasons, for the fertility deity, to recognize the taking of titles, to restore peace in troubled communities, to maintain cohesion within social groupings and for general entertainment. As I observed while on the field, an Ogoni person can be both a Christian and traditional believer.

Ogoni in Colonial and Post-Colonial Context

Before colonial rule, the village was the institution exercising political sovereignty in most areas of the lower Niger. In some areas, villages were agglomerated into clans of common ancestry and other historical ties (Dike 1956). After the Berlin Treaty of 1885[33], the British occupied and ruled what is now known as Nigeria. However, Ogoniland was an exception because the people resisted the invasion of foreign forces into their area until 1901. Ogoni was the last area that submitted to British colonial rule.

The effectiveness of their resistance was both perplexing and embarrassing to the colonial powers, who often explained their inability to seize control of the area with a myth that the people of the area were cannibals (Isumonah 2004; Saro-Wiwa 1992). For Gelbspan and Fernando (2013), this claim laid the early groundwork for a social order that would stigmatize and discriminate against the Ogoni people in the years ahead. Based on this premise, I contend that that the current stigmatization and socio-economic conditions expressed by participants is a continuation of colonial administrative policies.[34]

Evidently, the long resistance of the Ogoni people to colonial rule made it difficult for the British to establish a strong presence in their territory, which resulted in the area's neglect in terms of the provision of services and public administration. Compared to other ethnic groups in the country,

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[30] Carved figures attached to the top of masquerade headdresses.

[31] *Amanikpo* is the most powerful and dreaded cultural group in Ogoni. Membership is either core or regular. Unlike core, regular members only enjoy freedom of passage where the group is performing; a privilege not open to the public. Amanikpo and its members perform in absolute secrecy and under the cover of darkness as they are not meant to be seen by anyone other than the members. They can, however, be seen only when on stage where their masquerades are displayed in daylights for public entertainment, as seen in this video: https://exquisiteafricanart.com/project/ogoni-amanikpo-marionette/. The masquerades are carved humans capable of talking, singing and dancing via local technology known to only core members.

[32] Though the belief that land stands for production of agricultural commodities is fundamental in Africa, it is important to note the African world view that emphasize that land does not belong to humans but is a gift from God. It is why most African cultures identify with the cosmological belief that there is mutuality between humans and the earth. This is why, I think, the Ogonis pay allegiance to their ancestral land. An idea that so much featured in Ken Saro-Wiwa's writings as he challenged the destruction of Ogoniland by the Nigerian government. For Ogoni, the earth has the omnipotent power to punish transgressors (Saro-Wiwa 1992).

[33] The Scramble for Africa

[34] In *Genocide in Nigeria…* Saro-Wiwa traces the story of Ogoni's precolonial independence, assesses their status under British colonialism, critiques their incorporation into the Nigerian federation, explains their situation during the civil war, details their exploitation by international oil companies, and analyses their current status within the country (See: Saro-Wiwa 1992).

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formal education came late to Ogoniland, which led to lower educational and literacy levels among Ogoni people. In primary education for instance, Nwa-chil (1973) observed that in Eastern Nigeria, of the nearly 6,000 schools and a school population of over 1.2 million in 1966, the Igbo had proportionately more schools and school enrolment than their non-Igbo counterparts. Anokari (1986) notes that, of 600 secondary school scholarships in Eastern Nigeria, only two were awarded to Ogoni people. It was only in the late 1960s that five secondary schools were established in Ogoni. Therefore, scholars from other ethnic groups were the first to write the history of Ogoni people and the opportunity for Ogoni people to be authors of their own stories came late (Gelbspan & Fernando 2013).

On the other hand, patterns of social stratification in Nigeria had strong roots in the early colonial period, as some groups enjoyed broad political power while others were extremely marginalized. As earlier mentioned, after independence in 1960, the federal structure and constitution vested power in the majority ethnic groups in each region: the Hausa-Fulani in the North, the Yoruba in the West, and the Igbo in the East,[35] disregarding the other 250 minority groups in the country. From these accounts, it can be argued that colonial powers established a pattern that facilitated the current oppressive structure in the country, especially in Ogoniland.

Based on the discussion above, Ogoni had long felt marginalized politically, economically and socially. The individual and collective memory of their experiences during and after colonial rule has given them reasons to develop an Ogoni identity. For example, Ken Saro-Wiwa had no hesitation in believing he belonged to a different ethnic group when he was teased and taunted by his Igbo schoolmates during his secondary school days at Umuahia[36]. Another similar recorded example is a remark made by Chief Melford Okilo[37], *Monkey no dey wear coat* - literally, *a monkey does not wear a suit* - implying that the high office of state governor was not meant for "little dogs". This was meant to disparage his rival in an election campaign, Chief Kemte Giadom, who was an Ogoni. It shows how the Ogoni people were relegated to the lowest status positions.

The Ogoni women, who are traditionally agriculturalists, were forced into cultivating the least profitable crops, a great obstacle to their economic independence. They were frequently subjected to derogatory treatment as a result of their gender and ethnicity. Stereotypes and derogatory attitudes toward the Ogonis have been pervasive since this early period (Isumonah 2004). As Nnoli

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[35] The creation of the three ethnic blocs reflects the three distinct regions that were formed in 1939 to facilitate colonial administration. The structure (three regions) was suppressed after independence due to contention over resource control, and the country became a federal state. Presently, Nigeria is composed of over 250 ethnic groups but as Kukah (1993) rightly described, the three ethnic groups "…behave as if the rest of Nigerians are merely chorus boys in the game of national politics…" It is accurate to say therefore that this concise narrative of the origins of Ogoni (shared with almost every minority ethnic group in the country) contributes to our understanding of the current Ogoni struggle- the marginalization of Ogoni during and after colonial rule.
[36] An Igbo town in the South-east part of the country
[37] The first civilian governor of the old Rivers State

(1980) remarked, the impact of such experience leaves the victim with fear and feelings of insecurity that leads to in-group solidarity and exclusiveness.

Following Nnoli's assertion, the impact of the experiences facilitated Ogoni ethnic solidarity. For example, they organized a protest vote against the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons[38] in Ogoni ethnic politics, winning the two Ogoni seats in the Eastern Regions House of Assembly. The role of ethnic associations in the creation and maintenance of Ogoni ethnic identity received a boost in 1950 with the formation of the all-inclusive Ogoni State Representative Assembly (OSTRA) for the promotion of the interests of all Ogoni people, and it helped to launch some Ogoni indigenes into state and federal decision-making structures. However, in 1951 its President (Paul Naakuu Birabi) and Secretary (F. M. A. Saronwiyo) were elected to the Eastern Region's House of Assembly on the platform of the NCNC (Agbonifo 2019).

Despite OSTRA's unifying approach, the Ogoni spoke with a divided voice when the colonial administration proposed to convert the Ogoni Native Assembly (ONA) into a Local Government to be known as Khana County Council in 1956. Again, the Eleme subgroup preferred a separate council of its own. Presuming an existing Ogoni identity, the Ogoni Divisional Union (ODU) formed in 1962 from the ashes of OSTRA, became the medium for fostering Ogoni interest with the creation of Rivers State in 1967 (Isumonah 2004; Okonta 2008; Agbonifo[39] 2019).

The Nigerian civil war (1967-1970)[40] placed the Ogoni in an unpalatable situation; they found themselves caught between Biafra and the Nigerian Federal state. The common narrative has been that Ogoni backed the Nigerian federal government against Biafra, believing that they were more

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[38] NCNC, a political party largely associated with the Igbos of southeast) in 1957, causing temporary domination of the Action Group (AG, a political party dominated by the Yorubas from the West

[39] John Agbonifo is from Benin City, Edo State (one of the Niger Delta states) Nigeria. He is a Senior Lecturer at the Osun state University, Oshogbo, Nigeria. As an indigene of the Niger Delta region, his research interest centers on environmental transformations mediated by multinational oil corporations, and the human consequences of environmental change with particular regard to grassroots collective mobilization. He explores the themes from sub-Saharan African perspective, focusing in particular on the extractive industry in the Niger Delta of Nigeria.

[40] Oil reserves were discovered shortly before the end of colonial rule. Two British legacies, however, combined to impair the evolution of a stable political system and social relations; colonial rule divided the population along ethnic lines, but incorporated the groups thus defined in a centrally governed Federal state (Zachernuk 1994). The territorial and ethnic borders that marked Nigerian colonial society were still in place when the country achieved independence. Established as a federal state, postcolonial Nigeria was split into three main regions, each dominated by one of the three ethnic groups (explained earlier in the chapter). Hundreds of other ethnic minorities of different size made up the rest of the population. In 1963, the federation was separated into four states when the multi-ethnic Midwestern State was carved out of parts of the Western Region. Partly parallel with these political borders, what many perceived as a religious divide cut through the territory: the south was predominantly Christian while the north was widely Islamic dominated (Coleman 1963; Sklar 1963).

The optimism of decolonization had begun to crumble by the mid 1960s. Paradoxically, the growing participatory options for the population weakened the postcolonial democracy. At the regional level, a system of patronage was created along ethnic lines. At the national level, the three-major ethnic group competed for state resources (revenues from oil and other commodities) that had become increasingly lucrative (Falola 2004). A deepening rift severed the north and the southern regions. The Eastern Region in particular, geographically in the country's southeast, was increasingly isolated. In all regions politicians feared the possible domination of their counterparts from other parts of the country. This was marked by incessant violent coups and counter-coups, which developed into fiercely fought battles for power between the Muslim dominated north and the Igbos who dominated the East (Osaghae 1998).

This violent reprisal reached its peak in 1966 with the massacres of the Igbos in the north. At the very least, the Nigerian government failed to halt the riots, and the massacres were one of the key events in the unfolding of the civil war (Anthony 2002). Amidst rampant fears among the Igbos in particular, the Eastern Region began to call for more autonomy (Kirk-Greene 1975). According to Akinyele (2010), ever since the end of colonialism had come within reach, the leaderships of all regions had at times pondered secession. After failed negotiations between Odumegwu Ojukwu, who was the military governor general of the Eastern region, and the Federal government over these conflicts, a decision was finally taken. On 30 May 1967, the eastern political leadership declared its independence as the Republic of Biafra, named after the Bight of Biafra, a bay on the country's Atlantic coast.

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likely to benefit under the federalist system. Simply put, they wanted to avoid another extension of domination of the Ogoni by the Igbo majority (Isumonah 2004).

Saro-Wiwa in *On a Darkling Plain* gives a narrative of the Nigerian civil war, presenting himself as an observer. The interpretation is that he shielded himself from being accused of sedition, treason, and as an advocate of secession. His strong opposition to the secessionists offers penetrating insights into inter-ethnic relations in the period before, but particularly during the war. He observed that many narratives on the civil war seem to be mainly concerned with recording the experiences of the dominant groups involved in the war, the Federal side or the secessionist, when in reality, it was the minority ethnic communities within the seceding Eastern region who witnessed the cruelest phases of the war. For him, the struggle among the dominant ethnic groups for the control of the oil resources of the Niger Delta minority communities was the actual, but unstated reason for the war. As the next section shows, he asked the oppressed minorities to "awaken to the real threat that is posed to their very existence by the politics of competitive ethnicity and involute loyalties of the majority ethnic groups" (Saro-Wiwa 1989:11).

It should be noted that Ken Saro-Wiwa had no secessionist agenda. His strategy was to maintain and democratize the Nigerian Federal state. He sought to transform Ogoni from a marginalized ethnic group to one that was equal with other ethnic groups in Nigeria. Though debatable[41], the socio-political situation of Ogoni at that time conditioned his position. These events took place after the discovery of oil by SPDC in Ogoniland in 1958, two years before Nigerian independence. Whatever reason one may give as the immediate cause of the war, most scholars argued that the discovery of oil was the major cause of disagreement (Okonta 2008; Osaghae 1995; Saro-Wiwa 1989; Bassey & Akpan 2012; Frynas 1999).

The creation of Rivers state was a great consolation for the Ogoni people as it gave Eastern Region minorities a much-craved identity, autonomy and relief from Igbo domination. But from their experience of the past, the ODU kept alive the Ogoni minority consciousness within the state; they asked to be considered as equal citizens of the state. However, the new majorities replicated the inequalities and marginalization against minorities ethnic groups experienced before the creation of the state. The action was challenged by self-conscious minority elites in the state, especially the Ogoni elite who questioned their political representation, benefits in terms of infrastructure and share from oil revenues.

Subsequently, ODU was replaced by three equally inclusive but definitely less political Ogoni ethnic associations: the Ogoni Klub[42], the KAGOTE[43] club[44] and the Ogoni Central Union (OCU),

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[41] Because a good number of Igbos think his attitude was nothing more than betrayal
[42] An association of young Ogoni graduates

which was probably a revival of the first Ogoni ethnic association. In a more constructive way, the broad consensus achieved through consultations aided by Saro-Wiwa resulted in the formation of an all-inclusive Ogoni ethnic association, the second after OSTRA: MOSOP, founded in 1990 (Isumonah 2004).

Ogoni Current Geographical Location and Population
Ogoniland shares boundaries with Obio-Akpor Local Government Area (LGA) in the North and Opobo-Nkoro, Andoni and Bonny LGAs in the South and in the East with Akwa Ibom State and Ogu-Bolo and Okrika LGAs in the West[45] (Saro-Wiwa 1992; UNEP 2011). Administratively, Ogoni is divided into four LGAs: Khana, Gokana, Eleme and Tae.[46] Within the traditional six kingdoms mentioned above, Ogoniland has 131 communities in scattered settlements. The Ogoni territory is approximately 404 square miles - 1,050 km² - with a current population of 1.5 million people[47]. Due to the densely populated nature of the society, it is difficult to identify the boundaries that separate these communities (Saro-Wiwa 1992; UNEP 2011).
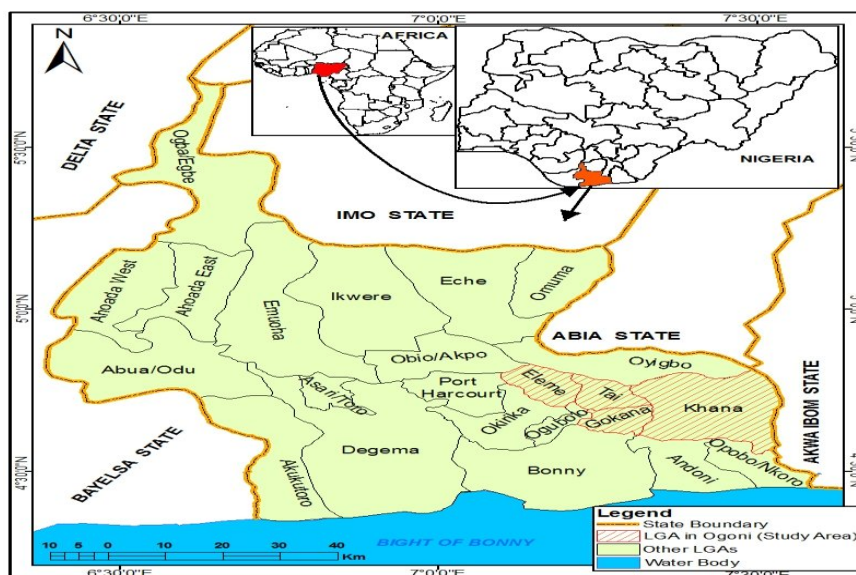
Figure 4: The map of Rivers state showing local governments that bound Ogoni. It also shows the four local governments of Ogoni. (Source: Tombari & Lekpa 2018).

This historical analysis has revealed the wealth of Ogoni cultural heritage and has established a strong background that facilitates our understanding of participants' reaction to the research context, and my own interpretation of their worldview. The Ogoni experience, which is similar to other minority ethnic groups in the country, right from its beginning deserves curiosity. Seemingly, their current demand for justice from the Federal government cannot be examined without reference to

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[43] Kagote is an acronym derived from the names of the four constituent Ogoni subgroups, namely Khana, Gokana, Tai and Eleme (See: Hunt 2005:63).
[44] An association of top Ogoni elites
[45] See figure 4
[46] See figure 4
[47] See Census, 2006

the legacy of British colonial rule and the activities of "indigenous colonialism" (Naanen 1995; Osha 2006)[48].

In the next section, I look at the person of Ken Saro-Wiwa and his understanding of his cultural foundations and the urge to bring various organisations and individuals, such as chiefs, women, and youths, under the umbrella of MOSOP to seek self-determination.

The man, Ken Saro-Wiwa

Born on October 10, 1941 in the village of Bori[49] in Khana Local Government Area of Rivers State, Ken Saro-Wiwa was an Ogoni man of remarkable personality. His father was Chief Jim Beeson Tsaro-Wiwa[50], a forest ranger and businessman who held a chieftaincy title. His mother, Widu, was the third wife. He was married to Maria Saro-Wiwa[51]. He was a writer, television producer, environmental activist and businessman. Before his execution by the Nigerian government on November 10, 1995, he worked in public administration. His experiences and persistent and nuanced view of the role that ethnicity and identity played in post-colonial Nigeria has since become a focal point for minority politics. Hence, his vision has brought Nigerian minority ethnic groups together in dialogue and solidarity against internal oppression.

Ken Saro-Wiwa exposed the injustices meted out to his people and society: the issues of human rights and the destruction of their environmental by Shell supported by the Nigerian government. Okonta (2008) contends that Saro-Wiwa was an agitator, innovator and orchestrator, who organized and articulated the Ogoni grievances in a most civilized way. Also, his consistency and coherence promoted solidarity among the Ogonis.

His writings, which exposed his worldview, laid the groundwork for his literature, a chronicle of the Ogoni struggle. His style of incorporating peculiar Ogoni elements[52] compels us to read and imagine his social contexts. His extensive journalistic and literary work scrutinized Nigerian culture and politics, sustaining an important debate as regards minority rights. He addressed the ecological, socio-economic and political injustices the Ogoni suffer at the hands of transnational oil companies who profited from a federal structure that marginalizes the Ogoni.

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[48] The internal colonialism is applied here in the context of postcolonial Nigeria, where the dominant or majority ethnic groups continues to exploit the minority ethnic groups through political and economic marginalization. The current resistance and collective mobilizations from the different ethnic minority groups calls for an examination as regards the gross inequalities and poverty suffered by minority groups. The Ogoni struggle is one example that justify this claim.

[49] Bori is the traditional headquarters of the Ogoni people, whose residents speak the Khana dialect of the Ogoni language; also, where the headquarters of MOSOP is located

[50] Tsaro or Saro is the Ogoni honorific for a firstborn son of a family

[51] See Doron & Falola 2016

[52] (Such as expressions in Ogoni and the Nigerian Pidgin language, see *Sozaboy…* Saro-Wiwa 1994)

Ken Saro-Wiwa focused on the rights of ethnic minorities, and a continuing challenge to international corporations and the Federal government who claim resources on minority lands without justice for people who live there. As Harvan (1997) opined, his narratives, such as *On a Darkling Plain…* (Saro-Wiwa 1989), are important because they not only represent a mutiny of marginal memory against hegemonic representation, but re-authorize history by projecting versions of events submerged in time. His political and social philosophy[53] exposed his ideas on ethnic identity and national development.

Harvan's (1997) work *Its Eventual Victory Is Not in Doubt…* revealed Ken Saro-Wiwa's interpretation of how his Ogoni culture shaped his nonviolent social mobilization; how the relationship between literature and nonviolent struggle is acknowledged in Ogoni culture.

> Rooted in orality, our literature was always a shared and communal experience. We did not only sing: we sang to satirize or praise or to cleanse society of some ill. Our folktales were not merely told for pleasure, but to instruct and reform. We did not merely dance to entertain; we danced to express our joy or displeasure. Invariably, story, song and dance came together and achieved validity as a renewing, reaffirming or instructional group or communal activity. Coming from such a background, my work as a modern writer could not but lead me to question the society in which I live and, having identified the problem, to invite my audience to a necessary struggle for peaceful change, for improvement (Saro-Wiwa in Harvan 1997:161).

The above assertion exposed Ken Saro-Wiwa's strategy of using Ogoni life, culture and experience to imprint on the Ogoni mind how they have been marginalized by their own government, and on how to challenge it. Furthermore, he discussed[54] how he used seminars and meetings and had Ogoni members present papers concerning Ogoni life, culture, their traumatic existence, and the need for Ogoni to organize and take responsibility. There is no doubt that he was inspired by Martin Luther King Jr. who said:

> From the very beginning, there was a philosophy undergirding the Montgomery boycott: the philosophy of nonviolence resistance. There was always the problem of getting this method over because it didn't make sense to most of the people at the beginning. We had to use our mass meetings to explain nonviolence to a community of people who had never heard of the philosophy and, in many instances, were not sympathetic with it (Washington 1986:12).

Like King, Ken Saro-Wiwa started a systematic campaign of persuasion to show the Ogoni the path and strategy to adopt against the injustice they suffered. He organized campaigns in simple, yet structured ways that resonated with every Ogoni. Even though Ogoni society was gerontocratic[55], he was able to mobilize the different groups from the different kingdoms to speak out against the predicaments that the Ogoni faced and to reinforce their sense of *Ogoni-ness* - honesty, resilience

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[53] See *Nigeria: The Brink of Disaster* 1991a and *Similia*: *Essays on Anomic Nigeria* 1991b
[54] (see *A Month and a Day: A Detention Diary,* Saro-Wiwa 1995a; *A Month and a Day: Letters* 2005b)
[55] As confirmed by participants

and simplicity of life rooted in their sense of community.[56] His approach was against any form of complacency, but for the people to take their destiny into their hands (Saro-Wiwa 1995). Thus his nonviolent strategy which motivated and encouraged Ogoni activism started to unfold, and we can argue that it resonated with the people because of his well-articulated narratives.

As highlighted previously, KAGOTE was one of the major platforms used for agitations and negotiations in Ogoniland and since it was largely for the elites, Saro-Wiwa felt the need for a more formidable structure that embraced every sector of Ogoni society. Hence, the move to include the ordinary Ogoni people through the creation of MOSOP, a strategy consistent with Hutchinson and Smith's (1994:5) description of how nationalist movements in Eastern Europe started and evolved. "Starting with elite of intellectuals … [and] fanned out to include the professional classes, who often acted as political agitators and finally has been broadened to other sectors of society - the masses of clerks, artisans, workers and even peasants". Osaghae (1995) affirmed that the bottom-up persuasive approach suggests that Saro-Wiwa was a link between his age group, Ogoni leaders, elders and the youth.

Saro-Wiwa's strategy became evident when he proposed an Ogoni Bill of Rights (OBR-emphasizing human and minority rights),[57] which was enthusiastically received by KAGOTE, which meant approval by the Ogoni kingdoms (Hunt 2005). However, the Eleme identity issue coupled with political reasons[58] made it not sign the Bill. This thesis included participants from the Eleme kingdom.

The Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP)

MOSOP was established on August 26, 1990, as an Ogoni grassroots social movement, to address the exploitation of the Ogoni people. As characterized by Osha (2006), Ogoni self-worth and identity were lost due to British colonialism and the ongoing exploitation of the Ogoni people; a major concern for all ethnic minority groups within Nigeria.

MOSOP engaged the people in a massive campaign against the structures that marginalized them. According to Kukah (2011:89) "the Ogonis pitched their tent against what they saw as an illegitimate state controlled by a tiny military clique who had become obsessed with the control of the proceeds of their oil." In the Ogoni Bill of Rights, MOSOP gave a detailed account of the

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[56] This is understood in relation to Ogoni social cohesion- social relations. Honesty and simplicity of life is that one does not oppress others to acquire wealth, so the wealth of every Ogoni person is the wealth of the community. The Ogoni resilience is about their capacity to confront injustice and still hold onto their values.
[57] Ogoni Bill of Rights (See: http://www.bebor.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Ogoni-Bill-of-Rights.pdf). The possible argument here is that the emphasis on minority rights in the OBR could be that Saro-Wiwa aimed at both local and international audiences (See: Welch 1995).
[58] The fear of being subsumed by the other kingdoms

neglect and misery of the Ogoni and called for political autonomy in order to participate in the affairs of the state as a distinct and separate unit within Nigeria. This included the right to control and use of a fair proportion of their economic resources for Ogoni development (Saro-Wiwa 1992).

Bearing in mind the Biafran war of secession, Saro-Wiwa's strategy for self-determination seemed highly suspicious to outsiders. His approach was seen by the Nigerian state as a continuation of that secessionist movement despite his insistence against secession. The mere introduction of the Ogoni flag and national anthem communicated a separatist Biafran attitude that was still fresh in peoples' minds. In defense of Saro-Wiwa's position, Senewo (2015) argues that the political autonomy the Ogoni were asking for is in the form of a medium, which delegates power to the people, thereby galvanizing them to take responsibility for their destinies through participation in the development of their region. Okonto (2008:174) supports this argument by stating that "the Ogoni Bill of Rights was, in a sense, an attempt to return to pre-colonial Ogoni, where all were citizens, and power and authority was legitimized by good conduct."

As Welch (1995) argued, the OBR illustrates the interplay of politics, economics, and ethnicity, within a context increasingly shaped both by access to international media and by human rights concepts. For Douglas, et al. (2004) it is of strategic importance because it not only formalized the Ogoni movement, but became a framework employed by other groups agitating for their rights.

Similarly, Watts[59] (1999) opined that it justified the rights of minorities as the proper entity to which accrued oil revenues should be apportioned. Furthermore, Kukah (2011:89) remarked that the articulation of their grievances has made the Ogoni struggle a focal point in the dynamics of minority politics in Nigeria. The challenge it posed to the Nigerian state and the multinational companies regarding environmental and human rights issues reveal the distinctive Ogoni character within the Niger Delta (see Saro-Wiwa 1992).

Indeed, the Ogoni struggle triggered minority discontent about political domination and socioeconomic discrimination across the country where, as Suberu (1995) and Nnoli (1980) argued, minority groups embarked on a vigorous campaign for new regions or states in which their minority status could be substantially ameliorated, or completely eliminated. As analyzed by participants in this research, MOSOP has awakened Ogoni consciousness, who collectively questioned the structures of their society, especially those that generate and promote processes of social, political,

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[59] Michael J. Watts is an English emeritus professor of Geography who is referred to as a leading critical intellectual figure of the academic left, and a fiercely original mind, and a brilliant theorist. As an intensively productive scholar, he has worked on variety of themes from African development to contemporary geopolitics, social movements and oil politics. His works have contributed to the development of political ecology, struggles over resources and recently on how politics of identity play out in the contemporary world. His first major study, *Silent Violence*, dealt with the effects of colonialism on the susceptibility of Northern Nigerians to food shortage and famine. Over the last decade he has continued to work in Nigeria, but on the political ecology of oil and the effect of oil exploitation on Ogoni people in the Niger Delta.

and economic exploitation. One can conclude therefore that MOSOP is a social actor by means of grassroots mobilizations[60] (Martin 1984) with its stated hope of transforming Ogoni society.

As a strategy and means of sustainability, Ken Saro-Wiwa introduced the One Naira Ogoni Survival Fund (ONOSUF) (Saro-Wiwa in Harvan 1997), which supported his people for their total commitment and dedication to the movement. Apart from the traditional way of waving palm fronds[61], MOSOP's campaign strategies were using press statements, public speeches at rallies, a monthly newsletter, national dailies, literary works, books, journal articles, and addresses to various audiences of Ogoni, the general Nigerian public and the international community (Isumonah 2004). Ken Saro-Wiwa's strong appeal to the international community propelled the recognition of the Ogoni movement as an indigenous group, which allowed it to participate in the formation of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO)[62].

A photo of Ogoni people protesting oil spill devastation.[63]

Figure 5: Photo of Ogoni youth at Bori, Ogoniland protesting against violence in the senatorial district.[64]

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[60] One of the key demonstrations of this is found in their principal slogan- (Ogoni National Anthem) *Aaboo Aaboo pa Ogoni*- Rise up, Rise up, Ogoni (see Isumonah 2004).
[61] For the Ogonis, the palm leaves are used for their peaceful nonviolent demonstrations. It is important to emphasize that the use of palm branches is viewed differently in other cultures in the country. That is, in some African cultures the palm is used to express sorrow, while in other cases to express peoples' grievances. For the Ogonis it is a sign of peace or nonviolence as explained by my research participants (for more information on the symbolism of palm in African cultures, see Gruca et al. 2014). For the Ogonis, the waving of palm leaves during demonstration signifies nonviolence and a call to their opponent for peaceful resolution of any troubles between them (see Figure 5 below).
[62] UNPO was formed on 11 February 1991 in The Hague, Nederland. It is an international organization established to facilitate the voices of unrepresented and marginalized nations and peoples worldwide (for more information see: https://www.unpo.org/section/2 accessed 23/05/21).
[63] Source: TheWill, 2018. https://thewillnigeria.com/news/opinion-they-killed-saro-wiwa-and-others-now-they-want-to-kill-all-ogonis/ (accessed 26/10/20).

He established two NGOs - the Ethnic Minority Rights Organization of Nigeria (EMIRON) and the Nigerian Society for the Protection of the Environment (NISOPEN) - to consolidate his relationship with the international groups (Okonta 2008). These actions revealed the radical approach of MOSOP, which threatened the interest of government.

To deter MOSOP, the government sustained acts of violent suppression through harassment, intimidation, beating, arrest, torture and extra-judicial killings. Seemingly, the coercive reaction of the government posed a significant threat to the Ogoni social movement. However, it is worth noting that the scale of international support due to the killing of the Ogoni 9 weakened dictatorship in Nigeria.

MOSOP: Internal Rift

Contrary to the idea of Ogoni unity, Okonta (2008) remarked that MOSOP concentrated on the ideological and entrepreneurial expertise of Ken Saro-Wiwa without a working consensus with other influential political elites. This means that there was rivalry within the group and, apparently, Ken Saro-Wia's strategy was not accepted by all. For example, the decision to boycott elections in 1993 was not supported by some Ogoni elites. According to Kukah (2011), this gave the government the tool it looked for to use against the movement. The use of propaganda through misleading narratives and offers of political positions to the greedy Ogoni political elites created opportunity for government to cause friction between members of MOSOP.

Though Saro-Wiwa had the support of the youth – NYCOP - the brutal murder of four chiefs[65] at Giokoo deepened the division among members of the movement. Saro-Wiwa, who was denied entry into Ogoniland on the day of the murders, was arrested and accused of inciting the youth who were alleged to have committed the murder.[66]

The four chiefs were all on the conservative side of a schism within MOSOP over strategy. They were not comfortable with the idea of NYCOP[67] mounting roadblocks to enforce the decision taken in Finimale-Nwika Hall, Bori, Rivers State, to boycott the June 12 1993 presidential election. This was Saro-Wiwa's strategy to force the Government to adhere to their demands. Arguably, the killing of these elders by Ogoni youth in the wake of the mass mobilization of the 1990s was not peculiar to the Ogoni. This is also seen in other cultures in modern day Nigeria, due to the idea that elders are perceived as ineffective against the external and internal agents that exploit the people.

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[64] Source: Sweet Crude report, 2018. https://sweetcrudereports.com/ogoni-youth-give-oil-firms-ultimatum-over-unemployment/ (accessed 26/10/20).
[65] Chiefs E. N. Kobani, S. N. Orage, T. P. Orage and Mr. A. Badey were murdered on 21 May 1994
[66] This is still a highly disputable issue amongst the Ogoni. It was clear during my research that the families of the murdered chiefs are still upset with the fact that youth from the other communities carried out the crime. One participant told me it is a major cause as to why some members in those communities (where the chiefs came from) do not support the activities of MOSOP.
[67] The youth wing of MOSOP.

Also, the level of distrust along generational lines between the youth and elders caused factions between individuals and communities. Consequently, the government infiltrated the movement and engaged in a wider variety of negative activities to demobilize MOSOP.

Ken Saro-Wiwa denied the murder charges but was imprisoned for over a year before being found guilty and sentenced to death by a specially convened tribunal (Isumonah 2004; Simmons 1995). There is a consensus among both national and international figures that the trial and killing of the Ogoni 9 was fraudulent. The trial and execution were consistent with the way Nigeria's military regimes summarily dealt with people they regarded as a threat to their authority.

As argued by participants, the interest shown by some of the Ogoni elite was instrumental; they sought to use MOSOP to further their political careerist goals. This internal difficulty, which is common amongst movements in Nigeria, points directly to the issue of identity politics[68].

The impact of identity politics on movements in Africa and Nigeria is a major topic that needs critical examination. It is almost impossible to separate an individual from his religious and ethno-cultural backgrounds. For example, my Tiv identity, as explained above, is my first priority and comes above anything else. People join political parties but maintain their religious and social identities, which as seen in the practice of politics in Nigeria since independence, has been a major point of contention. On the other hand, it was clear during my research that using MOSOP's machinery to promote individual political agendas is still a major cause of worry to a majority of its members. As a result, there is more to explore from the point of view of how grassroots mobilization such as MOSOP can be effective. Isumonah (2004) asserts that the fear of a reduction in potential benefits as a result of close identification with the rest of Ogoni has made the Eleme subgroup reluctant to share in a radical Ogoni identity. This is perhaps why it refused to sign the OBR, in an attempt to maximize the political benefits of being host to some very important federal oil-based establishments.

As tension and conflict always exist not only between particular movements but within them, studies concerning a particular movement must take into account the relationship between a series of actors: leaders and officials, those it seeks to directly represent and benefit, those who are affected by its activities directly or indirectly, paid employees and so on. There is an unequal power relation between the more and less educated, women and men, and members of different ethnic groups. These common differences shape the nature of movement discourse and activity in Africa and elsewhere (Larmer 2010; Davenport 2015; Beckmann & Bujra 2010).

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[68] From the point of view of cultural or political recognition- Chukwuma et al. 2018; Nnoli 1980; Okeke 2016; Raheem et al. 2014; Eghosa & Rotimi 2005.

Reflecting on the arguments above, it is obvious that there was a problem of leadership within the movement; the tension between the Ogoni elites. However, one can conclude that Saro-Wiwa's educational background and capacity to negotiate with powerful structures made him a willing and effective leader of the movement. Although scholars have argued that leadership in social movements has yet to be adequately theorized (Melucci 1996; Barker et al. 2001; Barker 2001), I subscribe to Morris and Staggenborg's (2002) assertion that leaders are critical to social movements because they are strategic decision-makers who inspire and organize others to participate in social movements. This certainly describes Saro-Wiwa, but it must be acknowledged that his leadership was challenged by Ogoni elites due to self-interest (Isumonah 2004).

However, the extra-judicial killing of Ken Saro-Wiwa as the leader of MOSOP in 1995 raised many questions among social movement groups especially in authoritarian regimes; the fear of losing a movement's leaders is a major issue of concern for a resistance groups. For this reason, many movements today operate without a formal leadership structure, which is a deliberate way to avoid repression or to evade the authorities.

As Isumonah (2004) argued, MOSOP's campaign was to assert the movement's voice over the voices of members, especially those who were double-dealing. Viewed from the angle of resilience, the research shows how Saro-Wiwa's perception and approach influenced MOSOP to mobilize against the internal forces and the state even in his absence. His legacy, which is (a) the bringing together of Ogoni into a single, radical organization which has remained dominant over 30 years; (b) perhaps the collapse of the military regime; (c) the declaration of Shell as *persona non grata*; (d) international support; (e) the predominance of non-violent strategy, highlights the role that unarmed organized local struggle can play in shaping the course of justice.

It also shows how experience with activism and repression by the state can shape activists' perceptions of justice for a local people; how his strong resistance and nonviolent approach offered the people an alternative to engage the state. The attempt at suppressing MOSOP with the execution of Saro-Wiwa has not achieved its aim of silencing the Ogoni voice. As Kukah (2011) remarked, the movement might be weakened, but the struggle[69] remains a subject not just for investigation, but a tool for justice for Ogoni.

Ogoni Youth

Since the Ogoni youth play a major role in MOSOP, it is important to explain what youth in the research means. A definition of youth, especially in the context of this research would be problematic. Contrary to the definition of youth by the United Nations as between 15 and 24 (UN

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[69] Participants view in chapter 6

2007), the situation in most African cultures[70] has less to do with numbers. What and who falls under the category of youth are those who identify themselves as belonging to that social group and are ready to participate in relevant activities.

De Wall (2002) confirms that "in pre-colonial African societies, adulthood was reserved for men with relative wealth and social status, and a very small number of older women. Everybody else retained the status of minors, however old they were. With colonialism and mission education, the idea of an automatic transition based on age was introduced…" As such, the "age-bound" idea is a Western construct (Kehily 2013), and most Africans believe that it denies people from contributing their potential positive roles in the society. It is important to note that Ken Saro-Wiwa was in his 50s when he started the movement and a significant population of Ogoni youth, men and women between the ages 25-50 rallied around him.

In this research, the Western concept of age is not used. The research made several references to the NYCOP[71], and it is worth noting that the application of the concept of youth is in the context of Ogoni where most NYCOP members fall under the ages quoted above. I have used "youth" and "young people" interchangeably in the research, but with a clear distinction in chapter 4 of participants' voices- "young participant", "middle aged participant" and "elderly participant".

Cult/Cultism: the Nigerian Context
The term 'cult' first originated from the Latin word *cultus* meaning "care, cultivation, worship" (Rives 2007; Ando 2008). As such, cult is embodied in ritual and ceremony. According to Ajayi et al. (2010:155), cultism is "… a ritual practice by a group of people whose membership, admission, policy and initiation formalities as well as their modes of operation are done in secret and kept secret with their activities having negative effects on both members and non-members alike". However, cult or 'secret cult' is a common term in Nigeria, and the activities (violent attacks) of those involved are of common knowledge. As observed by some Nigerian scholars, confraternities operated in the country at no degree of violence when they emerged in the 1950s, until they were later hijacked by the military government who saw them as a threat to their power consolidation (Oyemwinmina & Aibieyi 2015; Ajayi et al. 2010; Eguavoen 2008; Adewale 2005). These cults were used to neutralize student unions, especially those that challenged the military dictatorship; in other cases, what started as clubs or some socially conscious students became groups of bloodthirsty monsters who paraded as students (Ajayi et al. 2010).

Cultism is a widespread anomaly found within Nigerian tertiary institutions, unemployed youth and among communities. This is the case of Niger Delta where the youth have adopted the secret cult

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[70] Especially in Ogoni, Nigeria
[71] One of MOSOP's affiliates mentioned above.

strategy[72] as their defense against military oppression. As Adewale (2005) remarked, the secret cult issue is a by-product of many decades of military rule in Nigeria and its attendant culture of institutionalized violence. Their activities, which are mostly nocturnal, include: making blood covenants and performing other occultic rituals; initiation into the group during which initiates are animalized and some die in the process; organized opposition against any kind of real or imagined oppression; abuse of drugs and substances; intimidation and use of violence; extortion; stealing; armed robbery; arson; sexual abuse and rape (Ajayi et al 2010). My use of the word cult or cultism in this thesis is a reference to this kind of activities that has become prevalent among vulnerable people (Ogoni in this context) in the country who resort to it as their weapon for protection.

Ogoni as Indigenous People of Nigeria

As I argue in chapter 2, the post-colonial reality of Africa is to be blamed for the unjust distribution of political and economic resources. One approach to rectify these challenges - as established in Ken Saro-Wiwa's strategy- is the creation of indigenous peoples' movements who seek autonomy within the various nation states. The composition of nation states in Africa is a clear statement of how both the states and indigenous peoples cannot be separated. However, the inter-ethnic conflicts and struggles between states and indigenous communities over resources, leaves us with the conviction that there is need for drastic social and political change and the possibility for indigenous peoples to have their own decision-making autonomy and self-determination.

According to Saugestad (2001) the definition of the term indigenous people in African context is as important as other vested interests attached to the concept. Many states in Africa have been skeptical and are unwilling to accommodate the contentions and conflicts that go side by side with the terminology. One of the commonest examples is the resistance of indigenous people to dominant state powers, especially with regards to sovereign rights to ownership and management over natural resources located or exploited within indigenous territories. Stavenhagen (2016) argues that for indigenous people, what is crucial to their economic and social development to their physical and cultural integrity, and to their livelihoods and sustenance is their collective property right to land, natural resources and territories.

Martinez-Cobo's (1981) and UN (2009) working definition supported in Article 5 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, UNDRIP[73] is that indigenous communities (peoples and nations) are those who having a historical continuity with pre-invasion

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[72] Prominent amongst the cultist groups are the Deebam & Deewell

[73] The Article 5 of the UNDRIP states that indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State. See https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2019/01/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf

and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their cultural patterns, social institutions and legal system.

This event may continue for an extended period reaching into the present of one or more of the following factors: a) Occupation of ancestral lands, or at least of part of them; b) Common ancestry with the original occupants of these lands; c) Culture in general, or in specific manifestations[74] d) Language - whether used as the only language, as mother-tongue, as the habitual means of communication at home or in the family, or as the main, preferred, habitual, general or normal language; e) Residence in certain parts of the country, or in certain regions of the world; f) Other relevant factors. On an individual basis, an indigenous person is one who belongs to these indigenous populations through self-identification as indigenous (group consciousness) and is recognized and accepted by these populations as one of its members. This preserves for these communities the sovereign right and power to decide who belongs to them, without external interference[75]

Thus, we can argue in favour of the Ogoni people as fulfilling the criteria of indigenous people in Nigeria. They represent a tiny percentage of the total national population, and lay claim to a form of autonomy and sovereignty which predates the existence of the Nigerian state. The reality however is that the Nigerian state does recognize every ethnic group (including Ogoni) as indigenous to Nigeria and as indigenous people within the context of international law,[76] but only in principle. From a general perspective, the Nigerian state's position is in line with the political and analytical perception of the "blue-water rule"[77] that is common for many African states; that since the colonizers were not Africans, the entire ethnic groups in Africa are indigenous to Africa.

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[74] Such as religion, living under a tribal system, membership of an indigenous community, dress, means of livelihood, lifestyle, etc.
[75] See: www.un.org/esa/socdev/unp i/documents/SOWIP_web.pdf.
[76] The UNDRIP delineates and defines the individual and collective rights of indigenous peoples, including their ownership rights to cultural and ceremonial expression, identity, language, employment, health, education and other issues. It "emphasizes the rights of Indigenous peoples to maintain and strengthen their own institutions, cultures and traditions, and to pursue their development in keeping with their own needs and aspirations". It "prohibits discrimination against indigenous peoples", and it "promotes their full and effective participation in all matters that concern them and their right to remain distinct and to pursue their own visions of economic and social development (UNDRIP Articles: 8 (2a, b); 10; Article 32 (2); 33.).
[77] The "blue water rule"-also known as the "Belgian Thesis" or the "Salt Water Thesis"-asserts that: … to be eligible for decolonization, the presence of "blue water" between the colony and the colonizing country or a discreet set of boundaries would be needed. The so-called "blue water rule" emerged in the UN resolution after Belgium decided to give up its colonial possessions and attempted furthermore to move the United States to "decolonize" American Indian nations by permitting self-determination to be applied to these native peoples. (see Ryser 2017- https://intercontinentalcry.org/blue-water-rule-self-determination-nations/

It is important to note that the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights[78] can be used to identify people as indigenous, and these criteria are met by the Ogoni people. The position of ACHPR, reaffirmed in several other reports related to the subject, contrasts with the Nigerian view that is shared by many African states based on their responses and official state practices towards indigenous peoples' issues.

As I mentioned above, Ken Saro-Wiwa's strategy which was to assert the rights of the Ogoni ethnic group in Nigeria reveals his contributions to the indigenous rights debate on the global stage. His internationalization of the Ogoni struggle against the violent Nigerian state through participation in the United Nations human rights organizations is a major point of reference. Considering his approach, it is clear that his use of the concept 'indigenous' is to identify, not just the Ogoni ethnic group, but other minority ethnic groups who have been excluded in postcolonial nation-state formation and, as such suffer from particular levels of oppression.

The major point of importance to this thesis is that Nigeria has not formally given her consent to ILO 169, and her refusal to sign the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) when it was adopted remains unchanged. This implies Nigeria's neutrality on the UNDRIP in relation to the identity of Ogoni people, and that Ogoni is considered an ethnic group from the Niger Delta Region of the country.

Mapping the Thesis: A Road Map for Readers

This thesis is divided into 6 chapters. Chapter 1 contains this introduction, which gives the background of the research above. Chapter 2 contains two sections on literature review and theoretical analysis. The literature review explores postcolonial Nigeria focusing on the experience of minority ethnic groups in the country. It contextualises the Ogoni struggle and examines the reasons for the emergence of social movements and protests in Africa and situates the Ogoni struggle within the wider social movement literature. The second section on theoretical conceptualisation focuses on movement relevant theory, which is conceptualised within the principled and pragmatic nonviolent paradigms of Mahatma Gandhi and Gene Sharp respectively.

Since this is a PAR study, chapter 3 discusses my overall research strategy, focusing on the interpretation of methodology and methods. Based on the nature of the research questions and my interest in gaining in-depth insights into the reality under investigation, the chapter examines the research paradigm, research methodology, strategies and design used in the study, including

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[78] ACHPR- see Banjul_charter.pdf) has no specific definition for "indigenous people". However, some of the criteria it provides (self-identification, geographical isolation, distinctiveness, and a high dependence on land as a natural resources)

procedures, participants, data collection tools, data collection and analysis methods, and data credibility issues.

Chapter 4 is divided into three sections: the process of data collection; methodology, understanding the significance and complexities of my field experience; and data analysis process and reflection. In chapter 5, I discuss the research findings, drawing together the insights that emerged during the research process. The discussion of findings is categorized under six main themes that emerged during the process of analysis: The chapter presents the findings in clear narrative form using verbatim quotes from the dataset.

Chapter 6 considers, first, the limitations of the study, and then the process of my learning and the growth in my knowledge resulting from the learning, which evolved through my engagement with the PAR study process. It discusses the contribution that the research has made and recommendations for further research. The chapter ends with my future plan as regards bringing the research knowledge back to Ogoni for the sake of implementation of the recommendations I have made. It is important to state that the appendices section contains a number of substantial documents referenced within the thesis.

Conclusion

In the last section of this chapter I have set out a roadmap for the reader on my interpretation and understanding of the Ogoni resistance. I gave my reasons for undertaking this research, stating what I wish to achieve from the Ogoni struggle. I described the origins of the Ogoni society, which allowed me to contextualize the research subject within the general knowledge of what minority ethnic groups suffer in post-colonial Nigeria.

Chapter 2:

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework:

Movement-Relevant Theory, The Ogoni Activists' Theory

Introduction

As social protests have become more prevalent, there has been a corresponding proliferation of scholarly research on social movements across the globe. In Africa in particular, there are visible examples of citizens' expression of grievances splashed across news headlines on an increasingly regular basis. This chapter argues that African social movements emerged in the context of colonialism and post-colonialism, and that these have influenced the emergence and continuity of particular forms of mobilizations (Fadaee 2017). Throughout this chapter, I make reference to the Global South but would like to clarify to my readers that even though the idea suggests a wider territory, I draw specific conclusions relating to Africa and Nigeria to suit the context of this thesis.

With particular reference to Africa, scholars have argued that the struggles before and after independence mark a crucial point in Africa's history and provide a useful context for analysis in relation to events since the creation of independent African nations (Abrahamsen 2003; Nbete 2012; Loomba 2005; Ahluwali 2001). Despite the centrality of the independence moment, social movements in Africa emerged in contexts characterized by a variety of political structures and regime types as a result of the day-to-day struggle against the structures of inequalities and exploitation. For this reason, I am not treating Ogoni in isolation in this thesis, but in the wider context of colonialism and post-colonialism.

This chapter is divided into three major sections: Power and Economics in Africa; Understanding Social Movements in Africa; and Conceptual Framework / Movement Relevant Theory - The Ogoni Activists' Theory. The first section begins with the historical context of the Ogoni people's response to the problems[79] of independence in Nigeria. It examines the problems of post-colonial African states and the impact of multinational corporation; examined from the point of view of neocolonialism.

The second section explores the different approaches to social movement studies (Cox 2017; Engels & Muller 2015; Fadaee 2016, 2017). It argues how both colonial and postcolonial events are the source of resistance movements in Africa. The chapter examines pre-colonial and postcolonial movements, and the situation that triggered movements in the Niger Delta, marginalization, inequality, poverty, and environmental issues, socio-economic and political crises (Okonta 2008;

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[79] Gross human rights violations, oppression and marginalisation of minority ethnic groups

Watts 1999; Osaghae 2008; Osha 2006). These are also characteristics of the postcolonial situation and they constitute a major challenge to people from ethnic minorities, and others who are oppressed and exploited by political, economic, and class circumstances. The third section presents the debate on Marxism and social movements as a reflection of a "movement relevant theory" (Cox & Nilsen 2014). It provides a framework to situate the Ogoni struggle within the academic debate on social movements. It also addresses the concepts of violence and nonviolence to help situate the Ogoni nonviolent approach to justice.

Section 1: Power and Economics in Africa

Historical Context

Nigeria is one of the sub-Saharan African countries colonised by the British. This is central to modern Nigerian history since the legacy of colonialism has profound, lasting and wide-ranging effect on the current state of the country. For the purpose of the research topic, this section captures Nigeria's post-colonial historical trajectory- the basis for Ogoni social activism- within which this research is located.

Nigerians since independence in 1960 have been preoccupied with one major question: how power and resources are to be shared between majority and minority groups within the context of its federal structure. Historical analysis shows that the regional structure of the first republic (1963-1966) when the country was split into three geopolitical zones - Western, Eastern and Northern regions - gave greater power to the entrenched majority to control the resources of the state to the exclusion of minority ethnic groups (Jackson 1972; Bamiduro 1983; Ibelema 2008). Federalism remains the single most dominant and influential feature of the postcolonial Nigerian state (Agbiboa, 2017:2). Nigeria's first postcolonial rulers inherited a state made up of three regional structures, which had been configured by the British to use the majority ethnic groups (Yoruba, Hausa-Fulani and Igbo) as anchors for regional governments. The "Federal Character" principle came into play as expressed in the country's constitution (Agbiboa 2017). The principle captures the aspiration to use a federal political structure to transcend group differences by specifying that the composition and conduct of government entities must promote national unity, and avoid the predominance of persons from a few states or from a few ethnic or other groups. However its application remains a source of contention as evident in the lop-sidedness which the Ogoni people challenge and the imbalances they continue to experience, since the instrument of federal character has proved abortive, entrenching the hegemonic dominance of the tripartite majority ethnic groups.

Asaju & Egberi (2015) observe that the implementation of the Federal character principle, especially in Nigerian public service, tends to encourage unethical behaviour among public officials

and disregard merit in the area of employments, promotions and appointments. They further question the effective application of the principles by citing some concrete examples of lop-sidedness in representativeness in Nigeria. They provided empirical evidence that:

> 70% of Nigeria foot-soldiers are from Hausa-Fulani; 80% of all permanent secretaries in federal ministries are from Hausa-Fulani and Yoruba combined; 80% of those given oil wells presently in the oil from the Niger Delta region are from Hausa-Fulani; 60% of Generals in the Nigerian military are from Hausa-Fulani; 60% of the heads of parastatals are from Hausa-Fulani; 60% of the top ranks in Nigerian Police Force are from Hausa-Fulani; 70% of Nigerian State Security Services (SSS) men are from Hausa-Fulani; 60% top posts in each of: Nigerian Prison Services; Nigeria Immigration and Nigerian Ports Authority are from Hausa-Fulani... (Asaju & Egberi 2015:131).

This points to the misapplication or abuse of the federal character, which provides an explanation why most minority ethnic groups are asserting and winning recognition for their right as regards the politics of subnational state-creation (Nnoli 1980 & Suberu 1995). Anaysing the relationship between ethnicity and the creation of states, Nnoli (1980:258) asserts that "the forgone analysis of ethnic politics suggests that the relevant explanation… lies in the class character of Nigerian ethnicity, particularly the desire of the various regional factions of the privileged classes to carve out their own spheres of economic dominations." This is relevant in understanding the case of Ogoni; to push this further, the Ogonis' struggle is triggered by Nigeria's revenue sharing formula, which does not consider the principle of inter-state equality (Suberu 1995).

The analyses are clear evidence of the deep-seated unequal structure of post-independence Nigeria. The federal character policy has promoted ethnic and sectional consciousness, as no unity can result where the application of the principle discriminates against one ethnic group and favours another. With this circumstance, Ogoni agitation against domination by the majority ethnic groups is clearly justified. It is within this context that this thesis looks at the position of the Ogoni and how politics at the federal level of the Nigerian state has impacted on their social and economic life. Idike et al. (2019:13) forcefully argue that within the framework of the Federal Character principle, there is an obvious disconnect between the policy design and policy implementation, between intent and actual practices as appointments made by various administrations since the inception of the principle have all reflected exclusion rather than equity.

Since independence, there have been a number of constitutional reviews to define Nigeria to give a sense of belonging to her majority and minority ethnic groups. However, the definitions have often been lopsided, allowing majority groups' dominance and hegemony over minority groups.

Indeed, postcolonial studies have revealed how Nigeria was formed and that all the different groups and ethnicities did not become part of Nigeria at the same time (Adiele 1991; Babalola 2013; Falola 2005). For example, the Lagos colony, Nigeria's capital before Abuja, had existed as far back as the 1860s, while the oil protectorates were governed differently until 1906 when all of the southern

groups irrespective of their differences were amalgamated into the Southern protectorate. As it is, these different historical experiences continue to define each group's expectations within the national framework of the country. Interestingly, these separate entities were not integrated during the colonial era until the amalgamation of 1914 which brought the Southern and Northern protectorates into one country called Nigeria. Nigeria was created by the British colonial system with different groups without a common shared vision of the country brought together within the polity, and this colonial foundation and heritage has remained the basic challenge for nation-building.

This historical background explains why one of the fundamental challenges has been around collective identity. The ideological definition of Nigeria has revealed strong evidence of entrenched majority ethnic groups over and above that of the minorities in the country. The actions of Nigeria's past and present political elites point to the fact that the ideological foundation of the country was anchored upon a false and misleading premise (the fragmentation of the country), which has failed to protect the interest of minority ethnic groups within the state structure. Since independence, this trend has stamped the hegemonic tripartite system on Nigeria's politics and excluded ethnic minorities both in politics and sharing of national resources, leading to a civil war and subsequent ethnic and religious crises in the country.

The Nigerian constitution of 1979, revised in 1999 when the country transitioned from military rule to democracy, permits the federal government to exercise absolute control over national defence, security, mining, manufacturing etc. to the detriment of the states which are sub-units of the federation. The states depend entirely on the Federal government for their political and economic wellbeing. The states draw revenue allocation on a monthly basis from the Federal government for economic survival. Politically, it is the governing political party at the centre that defines what obtains in all the states across the federation. This structural defect has undermined the sovereignty of the states, who find it difficult to effectively deal with numerous challenges such as lack of infrastructure, insecurity, falling standard of education, poor healthcare facilities, environmental and ecological degradation etc. Since the tripartite system controls the politics of the nation, a sitting president, who is always from one of the majority ethnic groups, can use his veto power to withhold approval to any policy enactment perceived as favourable to minority ethnic groups.

In some cases even brute force is used with wilful leadership recklessness. A perfect example is the massacres of civilians by the Nigerian military in Odi village[80] in 1999, and at Zaki-Biam[81] in 2001 (Human Right Watch 1999) ordered by President Olusegun Obansanjo; and General Sani Abacha's invasion of Ogoniland and hanging of Ken Saro-Wiwa in 1995. These examples speak to how ethnic minorities are oppressed through federal power.

There are two central arguments here. First, is that the constitutional set up of Nigeria has given greater advantage to majority ethnic groups who in turn manipulate, dominate and exploit minority ethnic groups. Even apart from the three most dominant ethnic groups, local majority groups exist in every state and often dominate and suppress minority ethnic groups while aggressively defining their economic situation, subjecting them to impoverishment. Second, there is a structural problem where the states are appendages of the federal government, threatening the survival of minority groups within the states as well as eroding their identity and participation in political and economic matters.

Postcolonial African States

According to Lumumba-Kasongo (2014), some of the most important factors that have influenced the nature of the postcolonial state formation include various forms of marginalization of Africa and the selective integration of Sub-Saharan Africa into the international global economy, overexploitation of Africa's raw materials, her exclusion from serious trade talks and agreements, and intra and interstate challenges such as ethnicity and gender inequality. Fanon's (1963) call to understand capitalist development in postcolonial contexts as tied to colonialism provides a useful lens through which to revisit the evolution of the African postcolonial state.

In the third chapter of *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon (1963) argues that the national middle class that took power in most African countries after independence failed in its task of rejecting neocolonialism and pursuing independent development. Instead, it sought to connect itself to the

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[80] On November 20, 1999, the Nigerian military, under the orders of (Yoruba) President Olusegun Obasanjo, invaded Odi, a predominantly Ijaw community in Kolokuma/Opokuma Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, and killed many, burning the community to the ground. The attack was said to be in response to the killing of 12 policemen and an ambush of soldiers by a militia that used the civilian population of Odi as its cover. In a manner only fit for external aggression, the military launched a total offensive and razed the entire village and killed scores of civilians. Retrieved: https://www.punchng.com%2Fodi-massacre-anyone-with-tribal-marks-on-their-chest-was-slaughtered-corpses-littered-everywhere-bolou-former-bayelsa-commissioner (accessed 17/06/20).
[81] The situation in Odi was reminiscent of a sequence of events at Zaki-Biam in Benue State. Again, president Olusegun Obansanjo ordered federal soldiers to massacre more than 100 Tiv (see Chapter 1) civilians in several villages at Zaki-Biam-Ukum, Local Government of Benue state on October 22, 2001. Again, this was carried out as revenge for the killing of 19 Nigerian soldiers who had been deployed to the area to restore law and order following clashes between the Tiv and Jukun (Taraba states) ethnic groups, both minority ethnic groups from Northeast-central Nigeria. The allegation was that the Tiv militia were responsible for the abduction and murder of the soldiers (allegedly mistaken for Jukun militiamen disguised as soldiers) whose mutilated bodies were found in the village of Zaki-Biam. Retrieved: https://www.nigeria-soldiers-massacre-civilians-revenge-attack-benue-state (accessed 17/06/20).

capitalist core and further impoverished countries which had yet to recover from the colonial experience. He argues that by failing to become a bourgeoisie, this middle class ended up using nationalism in the worst way possible. Fanon's theorization of the class structure in the colonial context is characterized by his harsh assessment of this class, a class that was counter-revolutionary in every sense: the national bourgeoisie, which takes over power at the end of the colonial regime, is an underdeveloped bourgeoisie. Fanon historicizes the reasons for the emergence of this dependent bourgeoisie by connecting them to processes of colonial extraction. Shivji (1976) proposes the argument that the ruling section of the petit bourgeoisie is the bureaucratic bourgeoisie which is dependent on the international bourgeoisie, since this national bourgeoisie turns its back more and more on the interior and on the real facts of its undeveloped country, and tends to look towards the former mother country and the foreign capitalists who count on its obliging compliance (Fanon 1963).

Doornbos (1990) pointed out that at the emergence of the postcolonial African state, the state was to direct the economy and, through product marketing and other mechanisms, seek to extract a surplus that it would redirect partly for the maintenance and expansion of its own apparatus, as well as redistribution to other sectors. This was manifest in the extraction of natural resources and the setting up of an entire infrastructure solely geared towards exporting these resources to the colonial metropolis to meet their industrial needs. However, the high expectations bestowed on the state could hardly be fulfilled under the prevailing conditions such as overdependence upon foreign aid and the debt burden; as well as misuse of public funds for personal gain by bureaucrats.

In his analyses of the African state, Van de Walle (1995) notes that since 1960, with a handful of exceptions, the postcolonial state in Africa has been largely anti-developmental. Parasitic, self-seeking, and inept, it has been simultaneously very coercive and extremely weak, and preys on civil society. He further notes that the bureaucracy's effectiveness has typically been undermined by a patrimonial logic in which state assets are routinely plundered for the regime's political advantage and state-society relations have been characterized by clientelism rather than citizenship. The state, powerless to elicit respect or loyalty from the populace, has typically used threats and coercion to achieve minimal - usually passive - acquiescence.

Fanon provides a more extensive version of the Marxist notion of a ruling class in the postcolonial African state. His attempts to criticize and deepen Marxist analysis result from his understanding of the different relationship between base and superstructure in the colonial context. He states that race supersedes the economic question in the colony, arguing: "In the colonies the economic substructure is also a superstructure. The cause is the consequence; you are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich" (Fanon 1963). This is why Marxist analysis should always be slightly

stretched every time we have to do with the colonial problem, since the state's prominent place in postcolonial society is not only rooted in the colonial legacy. The apparatus of the state furthermore assumes a new and relatively autonomous economic role, which is not paralleled in the classical bourgeois state. The state in the postcolonial society directly appropriates a very large part of the economic surplus and deploys it in bureaucratically directed economic activity in the name of promoting economic development.

For Shivji (1976), there is a confrontation between the petty-bourgeoisie and commercial bourgeoisie for economic power which is complicated by a further development, one which emerges precisely with the accession to state power (at independence) of this petty bourgeoisie. He argues that "in an underdeveloped African state with a weak petty bourgeoisie, its ruling section which comes to possess the instrument of the state on the morrow of independence, relatively commands enormous power and is therefore very strong". In view of the foregoing character and nature of the postcolonial state and its bureaucracy, it is little wonder then that there was, for three decades after independence, little or no development. There was some growth on the economic front, though this was hardly enough to appreciably improve the quality and standards of living of millions of Africans. Hence the verdict of the World Bank and virtually all other "development" partners of Africa that the first three decades of independence were lost is not wholly off the mark.

For Lumumba-Kasongo (2014) the postcolonial configurations of the African State are fused with political alliances and personal, ethnic, and social class intrigues, and national and international power struggles. These configurations have produced several phases of political development, each with its dominant actors, its ideological base, its agenda, and its supportive forces. He observed that postcolonial experiences in Africa at large have produced three forms of privatized state. The first form of privatization of the state is associated with the early rise of nationalism in Africa. The state as a private domain also meant the exclusion of people who were perceived directly or indirectly as anti-nationalists or dangerous to particular ideologies of the new regimes. At the same time, most states, as controlled by heads of state, were also partially active in the public sector. Social services, such as education and medical services, were either given freely or had low costs.

Lumumba-Kasongo (2014) observes further that the second form of privatization of the state in the post- colonial era is associated with multinationals and international financial institutions. Although multinationals have worked with and through the states in the areas of laws, labor policy, tax, etc., in order to accumulate their capital, they superimposed themselves as supra-state agencies with power to challenge the claims of the states. They developed corporate privatization state mechanisms. Corporate in this context is used not only for describing the institutional driving force of an increasingly globalized capitalism (multi and cross- national corporations) but also for

depicting what appears to be a more general tendency toward supranational economic and political organization at the expense of state power and identity. The third form of privatization of the state, which is related to the second one, is associated with the militarization of African politics and power struggles. Militarization is part of the ethos and structures of the global capitalist economy. Colonization, for instance, was essentially a militaristic operation. With the end of the Cold War era, arms are smuggled and sold easily and cheaper than significant amounts of foods in open markets in most parts of the world. Within the framework of globalization, the market for arms has become a lucrative business.

The foregoing speaks to Fanon's move to trace colonialism's creation of a "native bourgeoisie" that maintained the relation of structural dependency between colonizer and formerly-colonized which provides a deeper theorization of capitalism in postcolonial contexts. This was not simply a natural by-product of capitalism organically evolving in these contexts, but a result of the colonial process itself. Following the assumption that capitalism cannot be understood without looking at how it is racialized, I argue that Fanon's conception of a native bourgeoisie allows for an analysis of capitalist expansion that connects it to the neocolonial policies that continue to condition countries like Nigeria today.

Fanon did not have much confidence in the postcolonial state's institutions and leaders to forge a path towards equitable economic and political development. In fact, he suspected that the postcolonial state would re-align with imperialist powers in due course. Thus, the political subjects who take the helm of anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggle in Fanon's writings are the peasantry, who on occasion collaborate with the working classes and the lumpen-proletariat. In this sense, whenever Fanon refers to the 'masses' in his writings, he means this composite aggregation of populist power from below, made up predominantly of the peasantry, but also the working classes and the informal urban poor who for him constitute the revolutionary political subjects of Third World revolutions. In addition to Fanon's de-emphasis on the postcolonial state as a primary agent that can instigate transformative political change, his championing of mass political struggle from below and his persistent critique of imperialism as inextricably connected to capitalist expansion, Fanon also insisted that armed struggle would be necessary to overthrow and re-make the international order on more egalitarian terms.

Evidently, continuing from its colonial progenitor, the postcolonial African state has been an instrument of exploitation and predation. During the colonial era, European officials designed all institutions of the colonial government to facilitate the extraction and transfer of Africa's resources for the benefit of Europe. At independence, these institutions remained in place, and African leaders stepped in and inherited the perverse institutions that treated the citizens as subjects. Given this

background, the postcolonial African state has not been an agent of development, but has merely facilitated exploitation, corruption and bad leadership. There is therefore a need to reconstitute and reconstruct the African state, to meet the needs of her people in the 21st century and beyond. Ferguson (2006) reminds us that the contemporary postcolonial African state has continued to "be ruled in significant part by transnational organizations."

Multinational Corporations and Neocolonialism

According to Buckley (2003) modern multinational corporations have their roots in the traders of the mercantilist era of the 16th-17th century, who constituted instruments of colonialism. Their activities opened up the local economies, increased volume of international trade, expanded the western economies to other continents and increased contacts among the peoples of the world. Folarin (2007) observed that the discovery of oil in Nigeria during colonial rule and its extraction in commercial and exportable quantity from the 1950s attracted many MNCs.

He further argued that more MNCs came into the country, including those whose focus hitherto was not oil, diversified into the oil sector and the industry of prospecting, exploration, lifting of crude and sale of refined oil boomed. With their collaborators in government, Shell, Agip, Total and Unipetrol had the support of their home countries and headquarters abroad, where the profits will go, and the Nigerian market became a booming one. In recent years, Chevron, Elf (now with Total), Mobil, Texaco and small scale indigenous (petrol) companies have joined in the second stage of the oil boom (Folarin 2007). It must be emphasized that MNCs and their neocolonial nature in Africa and the Third World have created fundamental structural imbalances in the state. The entrepreneurial privileged class in indigenous business who partner with the MNCs and foreign contractors have emerged as the rich few in whose hands the economic destiny of Africa is placed; and who are more likely to utilize the vantages of economic power for favourable policy outcomes and indeed control of political power.

According to Ebegbulem et al. (2013), over eighty percent of Nigeria's wealth comes from oil, which is pumped out of the Niger-Delta regions in millions of barrels daily by multinational oil corporations like Shell, Chevron, Mobil, etc. Despite this wealth of natural resources, the indigenous people of this area are still very poor and their environment polluted. Many residents of this region still sleep in mud houses without electricity, drink dirty water from ponds and rivers, and live far below subsistence level. They survive by fishing, but oil spillage has damaged their fish stocks. The oil wealth accruing from their land is shared between the Nigerian government and the oil companies with very little or nothing getting to the communities. The government's share of the money often ends up in the private bank accounts of corrupt government officials. This explains

why, in many instances, the government's position has been in favour of the multinational oil corporations in conflicts with the host communities.

For instance, the activities of the Euro-American conglomerate Shell in the Niger Delta are far from compensating the ills of the colonial and post-colonial past, but have created new ethnic and environmental problems and accentuated the rate, pace and measure of postcolonial exploitation. The government's protectionist policy towards Shell and other Euro-American companies in Nigeria has cemented Afro-Western relations at the governmental level, without improving how ordinary Nigerians see the West (Folarin 2007).

The presence of multinational oil corporations does not lead to any sign of true development there; rather, they exist to maximize profit, as their main concern is to explore and produce crude oil profitably. This view corroborates Bamet and Muller (1974) who stated that "the unfortunate role of the global corporation in maintaining and increasing poverty around the world is due primarily to the dismal reality that global corporations and poor countries have different, indeed conflicting interests, priorities and needs. The primary interest of the global corporation is worldwide profit maximization."

Ebegbulem et al. (2013) noted that oil exploration and exploitation in the Niger Delta region has destroyed the means of livelihood of the inhabitants. Lack of employment has led many jobless youths to emigrate to the towns and cities where jobs are not guaranteed. The oil money is neither invested in their localities nor in nearby cities; rather it was channeled to other major towns and cities outside the region or invested in infrastructure which the region hardly benefits from. Folarin (2007) argued that the exploitative tendencies of multinational companies in Nigeria have not only impacted on the cost of governance but also on nationhood. MNCs have enjoyed unbridled relationship with their surrogates in government - military or civilian - who have always used the wealth from the oil in the South to implement failed projects through "jumbo contracts" awarded to MNCs and their local collaborators, while the source (oil-producing states) languish in perpetual squalor and ecological degradation as a result of activities of the foreign oil companies.

The Nigerian government and multinational oil corporations operating in the Niger Delta area have failed to recognize that they are obligated to provide clean pipe-born water, good roads, schools, health care services to the people of this region to reciprocate for the crude oil extracted from there. Even when these amenities are provided, they only facilitate the exploitation of the communities as evidenced in the construction of access roads that link up their various oil and gas fields and not necessarily to develop the host communities (Azaiki, 2003). The foregoing speaks to the Ogoni situation in which the imbalances and neocolonial activities of the MNCs extend or become visible

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in the Global North/Global South dialogue. MNCs' exploitative activities and integrative tendencies construct inequalities between the developed North and the developing South.

As a framework for the future, I think Ryggvik's (2010, 2015) analysis of the Norwegian oil experience, which has managed to develop an oil sector without destroying the structures of a well-functioning egalitarian society, could be a relevant toolbox for the Nigerian government as regards the management of oil resources in the Niger Delta.

Section 2: Understanding Social Movements in Africa

Social Movements in the South

Social movement studies has gone through different paradigm shifts between North American and European approaches, since its emergence as a scholarly field. In fact, social movement studies remains Northern-centric since it does not focus on Southern movements on their own terms (Fadaee 2011; Poulson et al. 2014). It is crucial to note that some scholars have raised concerns about the inability of dominant social movement theory to explain social movements in specific regions, especially in Latin America (Escobar 2008); Africa (Mamdani and Wamba-dia-Wamba 1995; Ellis & van Kessel 2009); South and Southeast Asia (Scott 1985; Ford 2013). Langdon (2020:1) specifically remarked that social movements in Africa are understudied. Without invoking the idea of *sui generis*, the significance of historical contexts and the structural transformation of Southern societies as well as their complex social, political, cultural and institutional unity must be considered when establishing a paradigm of social movement.

Obviously social movements are difficult to define given the range of phenomena associated with them, but it is possible to draw out some common features. Collective action and oppositional political activism are firmly established features of any society because they pose a challenge to inequality, exclusion and injustice rooted in the oppression of people. Oppressive practices and exclusionary policies are often the catalyst for participation in collective action to generate a conscious move towards social, cultural and political change which as Good (2014) remarked the power of the people lay in their collective capacity to make things happen.

According to Medearis (2005:54), social movements "are usually understood to be collective challenges mounted by relatively marginal groups against powerful elites and dominant ideologies". The reasons are associated with long histories of external interference (such as colonialism), bad governance, oppression, exclusion, poverty, conflict, scarcity of resources, and state decline. The increased global salience of the politics of difference as well as of issues of citizenship,

environmental justice, gender equity, youth empowerment, local political autonomy, and resource control have served as reinforcing factors in the evolving scenarios.

The Global South is a construct and its definition is constantly changing (Fadaee 2011; Nilsen 2016), it is clear here that "there is no *one* social movement studies of the Global South" (Cox 2017); particularly, movements that emerged in most of Africa, Latin America as well as some of the Asian countries that have been under colonial or imperial rule. Thus, discussion about social movements from the South must include their history, culture and structures.

Although social movements from the South suffer some weaknesses and limitations in scope as compared to movements in the North, they are able to effectively articulate alternative development visions and strategies. The Global South should not be understood as a geographical entity but an analytical category, in that most Southern societies have experienced colonial and post-colonial epochs (de Sousa Santos 2007; Bayat 2016). However, it is important for movements in the South to open up to ideological and political strategies that originated elsewhere, especially in the North in order to generate alliances capable of tilting back the balance.

Although many scholars have embraced transnational approaches since the 1990s, due to the emergence of highly visible international struggles such as the anti-globalization movement, it is imperative to point out that social movements research should not be approached from a single perspective or geographical location, but from a thematic angle, with an attempt to address emerging themes in global perspective (Fadaee 2011). This is not about dismissing the Global North context, as social movements in their plurality and variety in concrete historical settings can contribute to the global debate. Thus, the concept of social movements should be seen as a heuristic device that allows researchers to investigate social and political struggle taking into account the historical, political and structural milieus in which movements develop.

Social movements are inherently complex, multifaceted phenomena that allow for different analytic perspectives. In the 1950s and 1960s, scholars of contentious politics took the relations between social movements and their social and economic contexts seriously. Movements, for these early specialists, were part of the transmission belt from socio-economic structure to politics (McAdam & Tarrow 2018). In *Dynamics of Contention*, McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2001) launched a research programme which shifted the paradigm of contentious politics from looking at causes and effects of movements to mechanisms and processes that happen in movements and lead to different results in different backgrounds. Obviously, attention is moved to explaining the influence of social movements on political and other institutions. At the heart of social movements is the idea of social change which is why people join them. This idea resonates with movements in

the Global South, where as discussed earlier, post-colonial oppressive structures are challenged by the people.

Examining the prevailing view, which is that, in Western democracies, most social movements target the state and its institutions, Dyke et al (2005); Armstrong & Bernstein (2008) have questioned the idea of social movements associated with the political process and contentious politics approaches, arguing that public protest is also used to shape public opinion, identities, and cultural practices and to pressure authorities in institutional arenas not directly linked to the state.[82] Recent movements target many institutions such as religious organizations (Katzenstein 1999 e.g. women campaigning for the right to priesthood in the Catholic church), businesses (Soule 2010), marginalized racial, ethnic and sexual identity groups demanding for inclusion (Dyke 2003), environmental issues (Fadaee 2011) etc. Movement actors and actions have focused on internal or external factors to explain why people agitate for the sake of social change.

Within political process theory, McAdam et al (2001:5) analyse 20th century rebellions, revolutions, nationalism and contentious democratization outside the Western world. They argue that social movement studies should reorient itself to the study of contentious politics, which is "episodic, public collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects when: (a) at least one government is a claimant, an object of claims, or a party to the claims: and (b) the claims would, if realized affect the interests of at least one of the claimants". The idea is that even though many social movements direct their grievances to the state or state institutions, it is necessary to emphasize that movements recently target other entities.

It is plausible to argue that the social struggle in these regions arguably challenge deepening economic and political exclusion, and environmental crisis arising from the embedded economic neoliberalism of the contemporary era (Motta & Nilsen 2011; Thompson & Tapscott 2010; Polet 2007). In the face of these deepening crises, societies in both the Global North and South have reacted, in part, through social movements, collective action against powerful exploitative economic forces and oppressive political institutions (Tilly 2017).

The arguments above speak directly to the Ogoni struggle for self-determination, equality and the problems of underdevelopment in postcolonial Nigeria. Crucial to the Ogoni case is that it does not protest only against the nature and consequences of the current global socioeconomic issues but also the very foundation governing them. The manner in which the Nigerian government and Shell

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[82] Similarly, Chatterjee (2004) reflects on the case of India where even in a liberal democracy, democratic practices have remained fragile and exclusive (civil liberties are commonly suspended and the press is routinely censored) leading to emergence of a non-responsive and at time a repressive state where many subaltern groups remain marginalized. Nilsen (2012a, 2012b) echoes this in his account of Adivasi mobilizations in India. He shows how they are forced to circumnavigate their position as subaltern subjects within the "everyday tyranny" of state officials such as forest guards or police constables.

have exploited the Ogoni environment, often consistently disarming the society and creating misery in forms like torture and extra-judicial executions, the effects of oil exploration, rape and sexual abuse, poverty and exploitation, inequalities and conflicts, has provided grounds for the Ogonis to express their resentment through social activism.

Anti-Colonial and Post-Colonial Movements in Africa
Focusing on colonialism and resistance, this section explores African independence movements in the 20th century; a wave of struggles for independence in most European-ruled African territories. It explores the roots and nature of African grievances against colonial and the present "internal colonial" rule, situating the Ogoni struggle against "internal colonial" hegemony.

The anti-colonial protests in the 1940s and 1950s were the first wave of protests across the African continent. This was to get rid of the exploitative colonial state that had instituted elaborate social and racial hierarchies and deeply fragmented African societies. Some anti-colonial thinkers (Fanon 1968 and Mamdani 2018) have noted how colonial rule deliberately atomised African societies. While Fanon observed that the colonial world is divided into "compartments" (Fanon 1968:39), Mamdani's theory of the "bifurcated state" argued that colonial administrators divided populations into "settlers" and "natives," "races" and "ethnicities," bound to urban and rural areas ruled respectively by civil law and customary law. Rural areas were governed by a "Native" authority, yet with migration to urban areas, colonial authorities dreaded the disruptive effect of "de-tribalized natives" in the cities (Mamdani 1996).

As these rural migrants came to constitute an urban underclass, colonial administrators used labour unions to control the workers, absorbing the labourers into the transport sector and the lower echelons of the state bureaucracy, separating the incipient working class from the "*lumpenproletariat.*" [83] Cooper (1996) observed that influential officials wanted Africa to have a working class. This was to separate an identifiable group of people from the backwardness of rural Africa, attach its members to particular jobs and career ladders and over time make them into a predictable and productive collectivity. This extended to the political geography of cities, whereby colonial officials sought to spatially separate residential areas of formal workers from the informal urban areas. Consequently, it was the inhabitants of the formal urban areas (students, workers and civil servants) who became the backbone of the anti-colonial movements in the 1950s (Cooper 1996). It is worth nothing that those involved in Nigeria included some Ogoni and other indigenous members across the country.

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[83] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels coined this word in the 1840s and used it to refer to the poor and disorganised strata of society exploited by reactionary and counter-revolutionary forces, see Hemmerle 2006.

However, the anti-colonial leaders faced the daunting challenge of creating a movement out of the deeply segmented population described above. Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi and maybe Martin Luther King much later on (Mazrui 1970), the nationalist leaders adopted nonviolent methods to challenge the colonial states. Some classic examples are: Kwame Nkrumah's strategy of "positive action" and civil disobedience drew explicitly from Gandhi's resistance strategy in India (Addo-Fening 1972; Botwe-Asamoah 2013); and Kenneth Kaunda's philosophy of "humanism" in his struggle for Zambia's independence.

Although the greater majority of African nations gained independence peacefully, it is important to mention that as colonial intransigence and Cold War interventionism intensified, many African leaders opted for armed struggle (Gunn 2018). One of the interesting developments is that soon after independence, these liberation movements transformed into repressive single-party regimes (e.g. ZANU-PF in Zimbabwe, UNIP in Zambia, MPLA in Angola, etc.). These and other similar parties dominated their respective countries until the second wave of protests in the 1980s.

It is important, therefore, to investigate the indirect effects and the new forms of agency arising from and within social movements that may have been unanticipated by their founders and leaders. Crucial to this point is the need to explore new ways in which to assess the impact of social movements in some of these regions by envisaging them as social and political spaces, or fora, rather than simply political campaigns, and the new opportunities for other forms of expression that might consequently arise within them.

The 1980 Market Reforms
In the 1970s, the state-led economic development model fell apart due to the rise in oil prices. The collapse in commodity prices and the increase in interest rates led to public debt crisis. The consequent result was the introduction of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, giving way to the basic tenets of neoliberalism: privatisation, deregulation, opening economies to foreign competition and the reduction and eventual elimination of subsidies in many cases (Dwyer & Zeilig 2012).

Also, the 1980s saw a global economic crisis that caused extreme financial difficulties; this led developing states to borrow heavily on terms set by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Movements emerged (partly inspired by the collapse of the Soviet Union which for decades turned Africa into an arena of conflict between East and West) to challenge the single-party state. Also, structural adjustment programme policies led to the collapse of manufacturing and agricultural industries, heightened unemployment and social insecurity. SAPs created intense strains and disorganization in labour movements that led to industrial struggles which were so powerful that they collapsed whole economies (Danladi & Naankiel 2016).

These policies weakened the sovereignty of many African nation states, bringing about the third phase of social movement activism. The policies which directly affected the living standards of the urban poor triggered the food riots of the late 1970s and early 1980s (Zghal 1995; Seddon & Walton 1994; Seddon 1986). The most striking event was the revolt in Egypt against the government's decision to raise the price of food and petrol in 1977 under the guidance of the IMF. The action was the first wave of resistance to SAP and the protests seen to be the major popular response on the continent to the enduring economic crisis. The action was a total rejection by the people of the national governments and international financial institutions' attempt to make the urban poor pay the price of a crisis that was totally outside their control (Dwyer & Zeilig 2012).

The Pro-Democracy Movements
The early 1990s saw the rise of pro-democracy movements in Africa. South Africa was part of this popular democratic upsurge too, as an advancing capitalist economy produced new skilled black working classes possessed of the capacities to form trade unions and other community groups ready and able to push for democratization beyond the electoral confines of the liberal /representative model (Good 2011). The point here is that just like the US-led dictatorships across Latin America mostly collapsed in the late 1080s and early 1990s, the African Soviet-backed dictatorships lost their patronage and started either to change into less authoritarian systems or collapsed at the fall of communism in Eastern Europe.

The transition from one-party to multi-party system seen in many African countries within this period was not an 'elite transition', but a result of mass protest movements and democratization involving organizations such as trade unions and church bodies (Larmer 2010). Though Bratton and van de Walle (1997) recognized that most African countries did experience significant political reform, including political elections, they argue that the succeeding experience can only be explained in the context of the former anti-colonial period. The unity that led the pro-democracy movements in ousting dictatorial regimes often concealed profound divisions as regards the outcomes they wish to see from the process of democratization.

Thus, the rise in street protests in Africa beginning from 1991 gave way to a peaceful democratic transition. The peaceful ceding of power by Kenneth Kaunda to Frederick Chiluba in Zambia is a perfect example of this development, (see Baylies & Szeftel 1997). In the same vein, a coalition of labour activists and students forced the Malian military leader Musa Traoré to hold elections (Vengroff 1993). However, de Waal & Ibreck (2013) remarked that African transitions were not successfully consolidated like those in Eastern Europe or Latin America, due to the African states' weak institutional capacities and their acute dependence on external rents. These political movements could not sustain momentum because of the poorly institutionalized "hybrid" nature of

African regimes that combined formal institutions with clientelism and patrimonial rule (Aidi 2018). This clientelism and patrimonial rule, as Brinkerhoff & Goldsmith (2002) remarked, established a complex chain of personal bonds between African regimes - political patrons - and their individual clients or followers in which the patron furnishes resources to dependents and accomplices in return for their support and cooperation.

Undoubtedly, the surge of protests succeeded in bringing about multi-party elections, but these served to neutralise and incorporate popular protests into the state apparatus. Relying on a European or American experience, Western scholars (Bates 2008; Bratton 1992; Makumbe 1998) predicted that civil society would be an "agent of modernisation" in Africa. As multi-party systems were introduced, many of the civil society organisations that had pushed for democracy became NGOs or development agencies (Makumbe 1998; Bratton 1992; Aidi 2018).

On the idea of civil society, Ikelegba (2001) remarked that the conflict in the Niger Delta is a major contestation on two levels: the challenge by civil society groups[84] and communities over control of oil and the distribution of the benefits among the constituent units of the nation, and a challenge to the state and the multinational partners of policies and the practices that disadvantage the region, destroy its environment and impoverish its people. For Ikelegba (2001), grievances, demands and anger in the Niger Delta region gave rise to the flourishing of civil society. While in the 1970s and 1980s, the communities disparately and uncoordinatedly articulated grievances to the multinational oil companies and blocked access routes to oil installations as protests, civil society emerged in the 1990s as a mobilisation platform for popular struggle against the state and multinational oils companies. The development of civil society in the Niger Delta region created a communal, ethnic and regional formation of resistance with considerable coordination, raising expression of demands to that of a regional struggle for equity and justice.

NGOs (funded by Western donors) delivered social services that the privatizing African state was unable or unwilling to provide. These third sector organizations became organs of state control, thereby thinning the ranks of the opposition, given that the African state utilized several strategies in containing civil society, including legislation, propaganda, co-optation, appropriation, and the removal of anti-establishment civil society leaders, among others (Matanga 2000). According to Mamdani and Wamba-dia-Wamba (1995), however, it is necessary to caution against the conflation of social movements with civil society, or reproducing the totalizing, Western-based narrative of civil society derived from modernization theory with its binary of tradition and modernity. Many African social movements, they argued, would not be recognized by modernization theory.

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[84] Organisations of the professions, labour, youth, women, peasants, communal, social, cultural, neighbourhood, development, environmental and civil rights groups.

Elections paved the way for market reforms and structural adjustment programmes that would inflict even more hardship on the lower classes. SAPs created an impressive economic performance but there was deepening abject poverty, human deprivation, vulnerability and inadequate social services (Heidhues & Obare 2011; Patel 1992).

A critical examination of the role of social movements at the time of these transitions reveals some ambiguity as regards approaches and practices. According to Harbeson et al. (1994), the significant decline in state capacity and the redirection of external funding to NGOs strengthened some existing social movements with credible grassroots linkages. However, at the same time, it led to a rapid increase of new NGOs whose entire initial existence depended on donor funding. As a result, they were accountable to their external donors rather than those they claimed to represent.

Collective Identity and Framing Processes in Social Movements

In this section, I present two approaches to social movements (collective identity and framing process) which offer useful contributions for our understanding social movements in Africa and the Niger Delta (Ogoni) struggle. While collective identity discusses peoples' common interests, experiences, and solidarities, framing is a look at the strategic attempt of movement actors to make public claims that resonate within the existing context.

Social Movements and Collective Identity

Africa is not a single country and so one cannot find a coherent shared ideal that is shared by the peoples across the continent. Africa's sociopolitical and cultural differences make it difficult to write on African identity as homogenous. The entrenched diversity in terms of language, religion or history symbolizes the intensity of these cultural variations and fractures any claim for a collective, homogenous African identity. But, people who belong together may contribute to the creation of an assertive political identity, a definition of a "we-group" that may legitimately claim its collective rights and speak of discrimination and liberation in ethnic terms. So, it could be argued that most activists in the African context, the Ogoni in particular, create a political identity that influences activism and gives direction to their political struggle.

Collective identity is not limited to social movement studies; the concept is also used in psychology, nationalism, religion, political culture, organizational theory and so on. In sociology, while earlier influences include the works of Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Goffman, Blumer (see Hunt & Benford 2004:434-438), Simmel (1964) explored the dynamics of group formation and highlighted elements applicable to the study of social movements: the need to understand that group cohesion develops in tension with conflict in specific historic contexts. My focus here is on the

analysis of collective identity in the social movement literature. In large part, this section relies on Fominaya's (2010) well researched work on collective identities in social movements.

Melucci: Collective Identity

Drawing on Touraine (1985) and Pizzorno (1978) on social movements and collective actions, Melucci's (1989) *Nomads of the Present* introduced his model of collective identity. In order to understand how individuals get involved in collective action, Melucci stressed the concept of collective identity as the crucial mediating variable missing in much existing work on social movements. "Collective identity" is not equivalent to "mobilising interests" but is a constructivist concept. It requires an intermediate level of analysis which brings into relief how individuals come to decide to act collectively as they share certain orientations.

Many approaches to social movements have faced the problem of bridging the gap between the structural foundations for action and collective action itself. This problem is starkly revealed in the Marxist question of how to understand the formation of a class-for-itself from the existence of a class-in-itself, which influenced the Marxist E.P. Thompson who entitled his book *The Making of the English Working Class*. For Melucci (1989:20), such problematics, dependent as they are on always-already present interests, have failed to uncover the processes by which "actors define the circumstances of common action"

His idea is that arguments about expectations are dependent upon a conceptualisation of the role of collective identity. Expectations are formulated by actors "who are capable of defining themselves and the field of their action, the result of this process of constructing an action system I call collective identity" (Melucci 1989:34). Until one knows, in at least some rudimentary way, the boundaries and content of "we" (also of "them"), expectations cannot be fully developed. As a process, the formation of collective identity involves the construction of a "we" by developing common cognitive frameworks regarding orientations, entering into relationships through which individuals can recognise themselves as part of a collectivity (Melucci 1989:35). This process then permits individuals to calculate action, evaluate the environment and the like.

In the context of the above argument, the Ogoni group regard themselves as having a distinct group identity within the Niger Delta region and Nigeria at large. For the Ogonis, this is defined by a number of characteristics that are fundamental to their sense of being: the Ogoni culture, language, heritage and religion. This sense of belonging has penetrated every socio-economic and political structure of Ogoni, especially due to a perception of marginalisation and exclusion within the Niger Delta community and the country at large.

Engaging the debate on collective identity, Fominaya (2010) opines that collective identity is a concept that continues to yield rich insights into the understanding of social movements. Here, I consider the analysis of "product" (Snow 2001) and "process" (Melucci 1995). Whilst "product" refers more to a perception of shared attributes, goals and interests (something that can be felt by people inside and outside of a movement), "process" is more concerned with shared meanings, experiences and reciprocal emotional ties as experienced by movement actors themselves through their interaction with each other (Melucci 1995). As Polletta and Jasper (2001) suggest, the issue concerning the "process" versus "product" debate is whether collective identity is the result of protest or necessarily precedes it. The effects of protest on collective identity are well documented, particularly when activists face repression (Gamson et al. 1982), and participating together in protests as Fominaya (2007), Hirsch (1990) and Taylor (1989) observed, generates bonds between activists and builds up a shared history and memories that can sustain movements even in periods of low activity or abeyance. For Gamson (1991:46), "public demonstrations of commitment under conditions of risk help create solidarity and strengthen it: movement identity is central to the willingness to undertake such risks."

For Melucci (1995) processes are not simply about movements in abeyance; he distinguishes between the "latent" moment, which is what goes on within movements such as preparing protests, fundraising, decision-making processes, and "visible" movement activity (more or less mobilization), which are mutually constitutive. Thus, "the molecular change brought by the hidden structure should not be seen as a 'private' and residual fact, but a condition for possible mobilization" (Melucci 1996:116)[85]. In line with Melucci's (1989) argument, Taylor and Whittier (1992) highlight that the development of collective identity is something that is constructed through daily interaction between movement members. From the point of view of the Ogoni movement, I agree with Fominaya (2010) that collective identity results from an interaction between more latent or submerged day-to-day activities and visible mobilizations. For the Ogoni, both activities have created important platforms where they foster reciprocal ties of solidarity and commitment. This helps Ogoni activists to understand who they are, what they stand for and who their opposition is.

For Fominaya (2010) therefore, collective identities can be understood as (potentially) encompassing shared interests, ideologies, subcultures, goals, rituals, practices, values, worldview, commitment, solidarity, tactics, strategies, definitions of the 'enemy' or the opposition and framing

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[85] Melucci (1996:130) also frequently refers to latency and visibility as two 'poles' between which movements oscillate, but implies elsewhere that they may take place simultaneously due to the blurring between public and private, and between individual identity and collective action (1996:115). He does not explicitly discuss how there might be other forms of visibility to public mobilization, or how latent processes might themselves become a focus of overt political attention.

of issues, but we must understand that they are not synonymous with and cannot be reduced to any of these things.

Based on her case studies of three environmental movement organisations, Saunders (2008) also discussed the concept of collective identity. She argues that collective identity is a concept best reserved for groups as opposed to movements: "Collective identity (in the singular) at the movement level does not exist, but *collective identities* do. Therefore it would be more accurate, when referring to the concept at movement level, to talk of either *collective identities*, in the plural, or, if we instead take the lowest common denominator of shared interests, the term 'shared concern' becomes more appropriate" (Saunders 2008:232). For the three groups she studied, Saunders (2008:249) demonstrates how it is not possible for the three groups within the environmental movement to share a collective identity, let alone for an entire movement to do so; "unless we choose to water down our definition of a collective identity until it becomes virtually meaningless."

Although Melucci suggests that collective identity can occur both between several individuals (in a *group*) and/or 'at a more complex level' between several organizations (within a *movement*), a great deal of his writing signifies that where it really takes place is the *group* level. For him, it allows movement organizations to produce working definitions of themselves (especially in terms of territory and scope). Also, it "determines the criteria by which members recognize themselves and are recognized" (Melucci 1996:32) and this is done through three processes: "setting of goals and strategies, activation of relationships and shared decision-making and emotional investments" (Melucci 1996:35). Thus, a collective identity results in 'unity of collective action', but at the same time he admits that "social movements are not unified and homogenous realities" (Melucci 1996:74-8); or, maybe, movements as a whole are too heterogeneous to share a collective identity even though activists within a particular movement organization might.

Drawing on fieldwork undertaken with direct action groups in Australia and the USA, McDonald (2002) argues that collective identity does not allow a conceptualization and exploration of critical dimensions of action and identity emerging in contemporary globalization conflicts. He urges scholars to go beyond the collective identity paradigm by conceptualizing collective action as 'the public expression of self'. He interprets autonomous activists' rejection of representative politics and their emphasis on individual expression as evidence that scholars need to explore what may be an emerging paradigm of contemporary social movements, one constructed in terms of *fluidarity* rather than solidarity, and in terms of the 'public experience of self' rather than collective identity (McDonald 2002:111). From the point of view of the global anti-capitalist movement, McDonald (2002) disagrees with interpretations of collective identity that reduce the concept to a set of shared characteristics or principles, or shared affiliation to specific groups.

On the other hand, Fominaya (2010) argues, and I concur, that it is not necessary to place *fluidarity* in opposition to solidarity or abandon the concept of collective identity in the face of movements based on diversity or strength through weak ties as long as one retains the *processual*, as opposed to 'product', interpretation of the concept. In opposition to McDonald's position, Fominaya argues that some movements (especially the global justice movement) understand and explicitly define their collective identity in terms of diversity, heterogeneity and inclusivity. By highlighting the importance of shared collective experiences and practice and the importance of affective ties and emotional factors in collective identity formation, it is clear that the literature outlined above has contributed to conceptualising the cultural and emotional dynamics of mobilization, which, I think, is a useful learning tool for Ogoni activists.

Drawing on Saunders (2008), I agree that the existence of organizations[86] within a movement with strong solidarity presents a challenge to the wider movement in terms of communication, mutual understanding and tolerance of alternative strategies. To curtail dissent and animosity, which could reduce the flexibility of the movement, mislead the public over strategies, make campaigns less effective, spread misunderstandings and create unnecessary tensions, it is crucial to adopt the idea of collective identity as the interaction between more latent or submerged day-to-day activities. Hence, we should challenge the assumption that collective identity always has a binding effect on movements. On the contrary, Saunders (2008) argues that it has the potential to dangerously factionalize movements.

Social Movement and Framing Processes

In this section, I focus on the discussion around expression of meaning as manifested primarily in framing processes within the context of social movements. Of course, there are other alternative expressions such as narratives, storied accounts of happenings that connect the past to the present and to an anticipated future (Polletta et al. 2011) that are just as important as frames as conveyors of meanings in relation to social movements. However, I give prominence to the framing perspective because it is more meaningful in the context of this research.

As an indigenous movement, Ken Saro-Wiwa used cultural and political traditions and images to create new languages and discourses of contention against an internal colonial (Nigerian) state. To acquire political leverage, he articulated and legitimized Ogoni claims. At the same time, he conveyed their ideas to the outside world to justify their demands both locally and globally. As Tilly (2002:90) observes, those who make claims "must establish themselves in the eyes of others, authorities, competitors, enemies, and relevant audiences as voices that require attention and must commonly establish themselves in the face of vigorous opposition".

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[86] MOSOP affiliates in the context of this research

One principle of social constructionism is that human behaviour, whether individual or collective, is partly dependent on what the objects of orientation mean, and that the meanings that these objects have for us are not intrinsic but formed through interpretive processes that arise in the course of interaction. This does not, in any way, mean that establishing meaning from a situation is a continuously problematic issue for social actors, and that we therefore are continuously engaged in the interpretive work of constructing and negotiating meaning anew. Meaning is often scripted and therefore embedded in and reflective of existing cultural and organizational arrangements and contexts.

Conceptualizing Framing
The concept of framing is adopted from Goffman's *Frame Analysis* (1986) which referenced the work of Bateson (1987) and is rooted in the symbolic interactionist and constructionist principle that meanings, arise through interpretive processes mediated by culture. For both Bateson and Goffman, frames provide answers to questions like: What is going on in a particular place or situation? What is being said and the meaning of what is said? And, most importantly, how should one act or respond to a situation?

Frames contribute to this interpretive work by performing a number of core functions. As Snow (2004) explained, frames function like picture frames, *focusing attention* by bracketing what in our sensual field is "in-frame" and what is "out-of-frame." They also function as *articulation mechanisms* that tie together the various punctuated elements of the scene so that one coherent set of meanings rather than another is conveyed. Again, they perform a *transformative function* by reconstituting the way in which some objects of attention are seen or understood as relating to each other or to the actor. Given the focusing, articulation, and transformative functions of frames, it is arguable that how we see, what we make of, and how we act toward the various objects of orientation that populate our daily lives depends, in no small part, on how they are framed (Snow et al. 2018).

When applied to social movements, framing interrogates the meanings associated with relevant events, activities, places, and actors. This suggests that the meanings associated to these relevant occasions are typically contestable and negotiable. As such, they are open to debate and differential interpretation. The point here is that framing conceptualizes signifying work, which is one of the activities that social movement leaders and participants, as well as their adversaries and the media, do on a regular basis (Snow et al. 2018).

Different Types of Frames
Looking at the framing literature (Benford & Snow 2000) there is no doubt that there are a number of frames that can be thought of as cornerstone concepts and processes in explaining events or

meaning in the context of social movements. According to Snow et al. (2018) frames build on each other and they provide a conceptual design that reproduces much of the research exploring the relevance of framing to mobilization both empirically and theoretically. Two key concepts or processes are relevant to my research context.

Collective Action Frames- According to Snow et al. (2018) collective action frames are relatively coherent sets of action-oriented beliefs and meanings that legitimize and inspire social movement campaigns and activities. Selvanathan & Lickel (2019) argue that one path to social change is through sustained collective action; as such actions often explicitly target the public audience to raise support for a movement's cause. The beliefs and meanings are the resultant products of activity within a social movement arena. The collective action frames focus attention, articulate, and elaborate the elements within the frame, and often transform the meanings associated with the objects of attention. However, this differs from everyday interactional frames in terms of their primary mobilization functions, which is to mobilize people for action; to convert bystanders into adherents, and as a result broaden the movement's base (consensus mobilization - see Klandermans 1984); or to neutralize or demobilize adversaries (counter-mobilization - see Kirk 2018).

For Snow (2004) however, while the identification of collective action frames contributes to a fuller descriptive understanding of a movement, that focus alone deflects attention from broader questions about movement framings' dynamics and processes.

As Tilly (1978) remarked, a social movement is not only a structural process, but also a cultural phenomenon, and factors that can affect the mobilization process are not limited to political opportunity and mobilization structure as emphasized by the mainstream studies of social movements. Thus, mediating between opportunity, organization, and action are the shared meanings and definitions that people bring to their situation (McAdam et al. 1996). That is, social movement actors construct the meaning for action with various forms of discursive practice, which movement actors convey important messages regarding the target of protest and the reasons for action to potential participants, supporters, bystanders and other actors such as media and political authorities (Snow & Benford 1988). Through framing, social movement actors render their event meaningful, and mobilize potential adherents and constituents; it is important to note that it also demobilizes antagonists (Snow & Benford 1988).

Hence, social movement activists must explain, in the course of their movement, the reasons, values, and beliefs underlying their specific claims. It is a shared understanding of the particular reasons, values, and beliefs attached to actions that really mobilizes people, and the construction of this shared understanding constitutes the major task of framing. In the case of this research, it is important to try to understand the current position of MOSOP activists in relation to the collective

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action frames established by Ken Saro-Wiwa, which were strategic and successful in mobilizing the Ogoni people to take action against Shell and the Nigerian government.

Master Frames- Even though, to a large extent, collective action frames are context-and movement-specific, Tarrow (1994) opines that those that emerge early in a cycle of protest sometimes function like master algorithms in the sense that they colour and constrain the orientations and activities of other movements within the cycle, such that subsequent collective action frames within the cycle are derivative or reflective (Benford & Snow 2000). Thus, when the ideational and interpretive scope and influence of a collective action frame expand such that it is sufficiently flexible and inclusive, such that other movements might employ it in their own campaigns, it can be thought of as a master frame (Benford & Snow 2000).

The examples of master frames include the civil rights frame, which emphasises equal rights and opportunities in relation to the resurgence of the women's movement such as the #MeToo and related movements that have erupted, denouncing ingrained practices of sexual harassment affecting women; the flowering of movements accenting the rights of the aged, the disabled, indigenous populations and ethnic groups like the cases of the San people of Botswana in Southern Africa, and the Mbororo people of Cameroon in West Africa (Pelican & Maruyama 2015); and the environmental justice frame in relation to various environmental movements across the world. Related to this thesis is Ken Saro-Wiwa's own work on constructing an indigenous "master frame" captured within the Ogoni nonviolent movement- MOSOP.

As established in this thesis, Ken Saro-Wiwa was instrumental to the mobilization of the Ogoni in the 1990s. Resorting to the idea of 'passive nonviolent resistance' (Henshaw 2015), he narrated and framed the Ogoni story in a manner that captured both national and international attention. In some of his writings (e.g. *Sozaboy: A Novel in Rotten English; On a Darkling Plain: An Account of the Nigerian Civil War; Prisoners of Jebs* etc.) Saro-Wiwa uses metaphorical language such as "…irony and sarcasm, repudiation and contradiction, as well as revision, anger and satire to expose and challenge the tyranny" (Tam-George 2010) of Shell and the Nigerian government; the latter of which he accused of 'indigenous colonialism'.

Though it is obvious that Ken Saro-Wiwa's approach was to secure international support, there is more evidence that he framed the Ogoni protest as an indigenous people's struggle, using terms like ethnic minority, the Ogoni environment and genocide (Bob 2002). Apart from his literary and other imaginative arguments (which failed to stop the degradation of their environment by the oil conglomerate, Shell), Ken Saro-Wiwa tried to re-territorialize his narrative to the grassroots as a way of galvanizing communal support and participation; to resist oppression in a nonviolent way

and to demand justice and fair representation in the Nigerian state.

However, it is important for activists to be cautious, especially in assuming that a master frame previously resonant with some groups will be resonant with all groups who may be targeted with respect to the same issue. For example, the influence of cultural context was prominent in the Ogoni movement, and there is no doubt that the cultural values achieved effective mobilisation in the early stage of the movement. As I will establish in the analysis section in chapter 4, activists brought back the marginal values (such as community and land/agriculture) that were used in constructing their collective action frame in the earlier stage of mobilisation. While the movement escalated, the marginal values became more widespread via the movement and the public discourse, but there is no guarantee that because it proved successful previously, it will still be effective for the same movement or another similar movement within the country that may adopt the same strategy.

Popular and Indigenous/Grassroots Protests

Popular Protests in Africa
Before the revolts in North Africa, the "Arab Spring"[87], there were numerous popular protests across 40 African states[88]. Several features (violent or nonviolent) distinguish these recent waves of protests. In part, there is a clear urban character to the unrest because nowadays a good number of Africa's population is urban-based. Africa's urban population in 2015 was 567 million people, compared to 27 million in 1950 (OECD 2020).

Mueller (2018) argues that there are two forces propelling the protests on the continent of Africa: "political grievances" among the middle class, and "material grievances" among the poor. Using Afrobarometer survey data from 31 African countries and interviews, she demonstrates that it is "political grievances" that determine when protests will occur, while it is "material grievances" that shape who is likely to take part in the protests. But it is right to conclude from her argument that in spite of the different motivations, varied social groups have come together into these protest coalitions. Furthermore, while Mueller (2018) notes how Western journalists and protest leaders described the 2009-2010 revolt in Niger as being about constitutional democracy, her survey of Nigerian citizens shows that economic grievance plays key role in individuals' decision to take to the streets.

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[87] The Arab Spring was a series of anti-government protests, uprisings, and armed rebellions that spread across much of the Arab world in the early 2010s until 2013. It began in response to oppressive regimes and a low standard of living. It started with protests in Tunisia and the protests then spread to five other countries: Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Syria and Bahrain, where either the ruler was deposed or major uprisings and social violence occurred including riots, civil wars or insurgencies (Amin 2012; Shihade, Fominaya & Cox 2012).
[88] This does not include labour strikes and local labour strikes, see Mampilly & Branch 2015.

This explains the marginalized African workers, peasants, women, minority, unemployed youth-who contribute by conscious effort to the making of history but are forgotten. It is worth noting that Thompson's idea has been used to raise the consciousness of workers in some African countries such as the strikes among Zambian workers in a clothing factory and the Ministry of Industry and the Nigerian labour workers (Brooks 2010; Otobo 2016). These and other examples give a clearer picture of the hostile social reality that the African people are fighting against since independence.

Thus, struggles and resistance in Africa are a reaction to the failure of state structures, and as argued by Sylla (2014), protest in this context refers to material claims whose satisfaction should benefit the vast majority of the people and not specific sectors or social groups. Independence was a liberation agenda, the reorganization of the political and economic structures to improve the political rights and living standards of the ordinary people. This transformation has not happened, and according to Dwyer & Zeilig (2012) it is the reason why grassroots activists continue to challenge what is considered betrayal by those in power. As Langdon (2020:19) forcefully articulated, social movements, protest movements, resistance movements, and liberation movements are dynamic projects of collective change.

Youth and Protests in Africa
The phenomenon of youth violence appears to be a major topic of debate among scholars across the African nations. Sub-Saharan Africa is seen as a region where youth are increasingly the cause of societal crisis. This reminds us of the common saying that a war is not possible if not for the youth. However, it is important to warn that the above comment is always based on historical specificity since combatants of any war (like the civil war in Sierra Leone and Liberia, see Ellis 1995) are made up primarily of young people.

Using Nigeria as a case study, Aluaigba (2019) demonstrates this with numerous examples such as the Tafawa Balewa Crisis, 1991 North-East; Jos Crisis, 2001 North-Central; Kano Crisis, 2004 North-West; Ife-Modakeke Conflict, 1997/1998 South-West; Aguleri-Umuleri Crisis, 1995 South-East; Niger Delta Crisis South-South. Aluaigba argues that the youth have been manipulated by influential groups in the society such as the ruling elite, the wealthy, and the political elite to be involved in conflicts of violent nature. This position expresses the country's predicament. Politics has always been a major contributing factor, and as Nnoli (2003), Obi (2006) and Ebegbulem (2011) argue, the country's historical experience since independence has demonstrated the interconnectedness between politics and violence. This connection is crucial especially if we consider the perennial spate of violence that is carried out in the country.

However, the necessary questions we must ask are: Do the youth fight for their own causes, or are they mobilized into war by others for various reasons? Do they fight to change the circumstances of

their particular grievances? Though the nature of grievances differs from one location to the other, the common factors associated with youth engagement in violent activities are corruption, failures of educational system, unemployment, injustice, alienation and exploitation by state and non-participation and decision making (see Obi 2006; Nnoli 2003; Bangura 1997). Thus, to understand the intersection between youth and violent protests one needs to examine the process of development of a society. The Ogoni case serves as an example of a society that is fighting for its survival due to the government oppressive activities that has deprived the youth of their basic human rights.

To put the argument in context, we have seen that protest (violent or nonviolent) in Africa is not limited to youth but an approach that the African people, regardless of age, have adopted as a means to seeking justice from their government that oppresses them. Also, it is important to distinguish between youth engaged in political thuggery (mostly manipulated by politicians to engage in violent acts) and those who protest for their rights in order to break the barriers of oppression and marginalization.

Thus, as with the Ogoni issue, youth violence does not happen due to predetermined causes, but there is a relationship between youth violence and the current unprecedented socio-economic and political injustices established by government's policies. The political actions of political elites have sidelined the youth, providing no channel for them to express their needs and aspirations even though they are often key figures in political movements. For this, Obi (2006) remarks that mostly the youth engage in violent struggle for the sake of their survival and against victimhood; for the sake of justice driven by the quest for a better future.

At the same time, it is important to point out that youth responses to the above reasons are not necessarily and always violent. The recent examples are the Sudanese protest movement (2018-19) that broke Omar al-Bashir's long grip on power, and the LUCHA[89], which advocates social justice and accountability in the DRC through campaigns and encourages citizens to fight for the promotion and respect of human rights, freedom from infringement by governments, social organizations, and private individuals. This was born out of frustration with the political process and diminished social conditions in the country. When President Joseph Kabila announced to postpone the DRC presidential elections, which would unconstitutionally extend his 2-term mandate, LUCHA and its members have been instrumental in organizing civil society to call for the respect of the rule of law and human rights in DRC.

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[89] Lutte Pour Le Changement, a non-violent and non-partisan youth civil society movement founded in June 2012 in Goma, the capital of North Kivu in DRC Congo

These students understood that violence is not the way for anyone willing to find durable solutions to political and social disputes and wars that have torn their country apart for the past half century. So, they decided to organize a series of non-violent actions throughout major cities in the country to shed light on some of the critical issues facing the Congolese population.[90] Also, the citizen's Broom movement in Burkina Faso, where the youth resisted the government crackdown to force democratic change. Migration has been one of the major responses seen from young Africans who believe they would be better off if the borders of the Western world are opened to them.

Indigenous/Grassroots Movements

Here, we are looking at the indigenous peoples, peasants, women and those who dwell in shantytowns, who, in large part, have responded to the extreme forms of dispossession, poverty and inequality established by neoliberalism. In Latin America (Vanden 2007; Slater 1994; Broad 2002) Asia (Nilsen 2012, 2010, 2013, 2015a, 2015b; Dhanagare 1988) and Africa (unrecognised in most cases) (Langdon 2020; Dwyer & Zeilig 2012; Ellis & Kessel 2009; Mamdani in Mamdani & Wamba-dia-Wamba 1995:1-35) social movements are vigorously and creatively engaging in grassroots organization and local and national mobilisations.

Social movements in these regions have challenged the conduct of politics, and their growth and militancy (e.g. the Zapatista movement since 1994 in Latin America) have generated whole new repertoires of action. Their actions point, at least, to the possibility of some form of "rule from below," creating a non-authoritarian participatory political culture, which is viewed as a beacon of hope especially when forces of globalisation create inequality or environmental degradation (like in the case of Ogoni).

Drawing from the grassroots movements discussion above, Langdon (2020:4) classified social movements in two typologies - strategic and dialogue-based movements. He argues that strategic movements are likely more effective at making policy change, but also run the risk of alienating support on the ground. Further observing, that dialogue-based movements are effective at keeping momentum alive, and ensuring movement processes and thinking are collectively owned, but may not be able to react immediately to unfolding events, as quick decisions are not easily made collectively. Evidently, social movements have various styles and aims in the regions mentioned, but one thing that is common with most of the movements is that they begin from the grassroots, questioning the structures of oppression; contesting power and pressing for change. They are transformation-oriented collective action derived from the people's discontents with their conditions or certain perspective from their colonial history.

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[90] See Frontline Defender- www.fronlinedefenders.org (accessed 30/03/20).

In South Asia, for example, the issues of "equality" and "identity" have been important to many social movements. However, it would be wrong to assume that there are fixed ideas and contents regarding "equality" and "identity" to be achieved in social movements. In fact, social movements often provide opportunities for dialogue and negotiation to consider what kind of knowledge they bring about. By way of examples relevant to the Ogoni movement as regards social activism, action and outcomes, we can cite studies of two powerful and successful indigenous post-colonial minority movements (Nilsen's *Adivasis* in India and Zibechi's *Dispersing Power* in Bolivia).

Nilsen's major theoretical influence is Gramsci, whom he referred to not only in terms of the notion of subalternity (exclusion and displacement of social groups from the socio-economic institutions of society in order to deny their political voices) but also in understanding the concept of hegemony (cultural, moral and ideological leadership of a group over allied and subaltern groups).

He focused his understanding of hegemony on Mallon's (1995) 'hegemonic processes',[91] which involve a constant process of contestation and reworking of hegemony at every level of society. Besides, Nilsen criticizes interpretations of Gramsci that see his notion of hegemony as being coextensive purely with the realm of consensual politics. He argues that the dialectical relation of force is both omnipresent and integral to the concept.

He also criticizes Foucault's approaches to state formation, the 'discovery of population',[92] with their attendant theorization of the state in disaggregated terms. He argues that there is a relatively high degree of coordination and unity between sites of state power and between state and non-state actors. His operationalizing of a Gramscian understanding of state formation therefore involves analyzing the tapestry of power relations woven across space to explore how some groups are accommodated and others coerced.

In his exploration of the nature of construction of *Bhil* subalternity, Nilsen (2018:18) exposed how "complex processes of negotiation, contestation, and struggle animate a contentious dialectic of power and resistance that is integral to shaping the political economy of democracy" (Nilsen 2018:4). He examined the 'everyday tyranny' of local state-society relations, typified by predatory

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[91] Mallon compares the popular political culture and discourses of postcolonial Mexico and Peru; he provides an analysis of their effect on the evolution of the two nations. in relation to political history, and from a variety of subaltern perspectives, he acknowledges the history of peasant thought and action and the complexity of community politics. For Mallon hegemony, as a final outcome, takes its determinate form from the very contingencies of the hegemonic process, which necessarily involves different social and political agents with their own agendas and notions of nation (as imagined communities). Analysing how competing models of nation and citizenship struggled, interacted and, finally, combined to produce a given outcome, is Mallon's goal (for further discussion see Mallon 1995).

[92] For Michel Foucault, the 'discovery of population' was the central point on which the transition from rule based on police to rule in liberal modes of government took place. Modern 'governmentality' takes population as its object. However, Curtis claim that Foucault's usages of 'population' are reconstructed. That political authorities cannot discover populations depends on the exercise of sovereign authority (See Curtis 2002).

and coercive activities of low-ranking state personnel in their interactions with *Adivasi* communities. He contextualized and explained the practice of everyday tyranny by tracing its historical emergence, tied to the production of 'colonial state space' and the creation of a new hegemonic structure alongside changing modalities of sovereignty. This led to a move away from power based grounded in shared sovereignty towards a new form of rule based upon singular sovereignty.

Nilsen examined the modes of resistance that were historically practiced in relation to colonial rule between 1818 and 1920, and demonstrated - against the Subaltern Studies Group's idea that peasant insurgency constituted the direct antithesis of colonialism - how this resistance is best understood in terms of 'contentious negotiation'. So, rather than mobilizing a timeless and autonomous culture of resistance in the face of an ever more entrenched colonial state space (as one would imagine is happening with the Ogoni struggle), the form of protest changed over time through the appropriation of idioms from a range of different state making projects.

Gramsci's (1971) theory of power creates the opportunity to present the *Adivasis'* experience as an example for the Ogoni struggle. Drawing from Gramsci's idea, Nigerian hegemonic rule could be challenged by the Ogonis who have the potential to generate an 'organic' understanding of their own oppression and a rationale and strategy for ending it. The state is generally invested in protecting the status quo, and when a movement, like MOSOP, emerged and develops, they often try to repress or co-opt the challenge. By definition, therefore, social movements resist political elites (Polletta 1998c). Even when their targets are culturally based or inwardly focused, they still often challenge the power and hegemony of political elites.

This addresses the fact that social movements use culture to subvert power, even when they are drawn from the dominant political culture. Probably this dynamic is best analyzed by Scott (1990), who shows how the 'arts of resistance' develop at a level often unacknowledged by those in power. Scott cites how slave religion and song often expressed resistance to slave owners even when slave owners saw these cultural forms as simply worshipful or harmless. For Scott, therefore, the more oppressed a group, the more likely they are to develop oppositional cultural forms and identities in hidden ways, and often intentionally so for their own protection. Considering the continuous oppressive tactics of the Nigerian government on the Ogoni people, it is possible that Scott's strategy is a good option for the Ogoni struggle.

In Zibechi's (2010) *Dispersing Power*, a detailed analysis on how the Bolivian social movements succeeded in transforming the country is discussed. *Dispersing Power* described new ways of doing politics beyond the state, gracefully mapping the "how" of revolution and offering valuable lessons

for activists and new theoretical frameworks for understanding how social movements can operate independently of the state. He examined how the indigenous *Aymara* movement in El Alto has organized itself especially since the first major *Aymara* uprising against neo-liberalism in 2000. He argued that the uprisings in Bolivia since 2000 represent the most important 'revolution within a revolution' since the Zapatista uprising began in 1994. The *Aymara* experience is not only linked with the continental struggles but adds something substantial, the construction of actual non-state powers.

Zibechi's analysis shows the contrasts between society and the state: the *Aymara* community structures and methods of organizing social control in the absence of state crime prevention (specifically, active state criminality) and NGOs as agents of elite creation. He also gives a comparative example of indigenous social movement co-optation and absorption in Ecuador. His identification of the goals of state and capital to separate, or create fetishes, of community functions that are divorced from their social context is worth noting. He identified in the *Aymara* an attempt to reintegrate into the community the political, economic and social functions that have effectively been stolen by the state. This is done without romanticizing all things indigenous.

With regard to organizing by autonomous *Aymara* in El Alto, some of the measures they took include the provision and organization of municipal works; the operation and maintenance of schools, parks, and radio stations; and conflict resolution and community justice systems. According to Zibechi these non-state powers are most often realized through general assemblies, neighborhood council meetings, and barrio community groups. He explained, however, that during moments of insurrection or uprising, confrontation, even armed, does not require a special body separated from the community. Instead, the mandatory and continuous rotation of tasks that exists in *Aymara* culture, social movements and non-state structures of everyday life extend to armed insurrection when the circumstances require.

Zibechi's analysis could be very helpful for the Ogoni movement since the dispersion of power suggests avoiding the creation of hierarchical leadership structures. According to Zibechi, this is done in part through the continuous rotation of tasks, and through a requirement of reaching consensus in assemblies. The institutionalization of social movements is one way of establishing state powers, in which the leaders, or the bodies of leaders, are separated from the movement as a whole. Crucial for the Ogoni, as Zibechi observed, is the active avoidance of institutionalization and of the separation of leadership from the movement.

These two examples of indigenous movements (the *Adivasis* and *Aymara* groups) demonstrate how democratic struggles from below do have the potential to challenge historically determinate power relations; but they also show that the response from above may come in the form of repression that

imposes a limit on the movements' advance. That is, political dynamics between the state and its agenda, and the strategy of mass mobilization taken by indigenous movements. The issue that is dealt with in both cases is how social movements should respond to this equation in strategic terms. How the rise of grassroots, community forms of social organization remain the indispensable condition for advancing the struggle for social change towards a new world of social justice and real development based on popular power.

Both examples are in line with Fals Borda's (1992) argument that social movements are expressions of power, seeking greater autonomy from the state and also from conventional political parties. As with the case of the *Adivasis* and *Aymara*, it is in the context of discontent not only with the state but also political parties and traditional forms of opposition to the ruling elites that these movements emerged. It shows how the state becomes the focal point for social movements to vent dissatisfaction; challenging the structures of oppression, hegemonic cultural orders and political power (Thompson 2011) showing that group strategy in response to oppression and state repression is crucial.

Indeed, by the very nature of being anti-status quo, social movements cannot ordinarily be aligned with the very system they seek to overthrow, of which sub-national governments which exert various forms of control over instruments of state coercion including the police are an integral part. Thus, following Osadolor (2004:35), action groups in the Niger Delta may be regarded as:

> resistance movements [which] emerged... with an ideology based on the principle of self-determination as a driving force for ethnic autonomy. Such movements were the expressed actions taken by the various ethnic nationalities to make their formal declarations and issuance of Bills of Rights in demand for freedom, access to basic needs and resources, protection from environmental pollution, and equal participation in the polity.

Social Movements: The Niger Delta Perspectives

In this section, I analysed popular politics in the Niger Delta; how it has been shaped within the context of the Nigerian federal state. Relying on the proposition I made earlier (movements from the South must be examined from the point of view of colonial and post-colonial contexts), it would be misleading to analyse the region's past outside the Nigerian federal state context. Indeed, the beginnings of Niger Delta politics lie in the agitations for separate states by the regional minorities in the early 1950s and subsequent dynamics have been greatly influenced by subsequent cycles of minority politics in the country. The idea here is to show how the emergence of a strong Niger Delta protest identity in the 1990s is a latter-day development facilitated by the complex dynamics of oil politics, prolonged military authoritarian rule, democratisation, structural adjustment, liberalisation, and globalization.

The Emergence of Social Movements in the Niger Delta

As scholars (Osaghae 2008; Ikelegba 2001; Agbonifo 2009; Okonta 2008; Osaghae 2001) have remarked, the image of the Niger Delta today reflects not only a deprived, neglected, and oppressed geopolitical region of ethnic minorities in Nigeria, but also a community of interests which has evolved around issues of oil politics and the determination of groups in the area to optimise the political and material benefits derivable from the resource, environmental problems and the struggle for environmental justice, minority rights and other empowering and emancipatory rights. Thus, social movements in the region emerged due to disaffection and long-standing perceptions of discrimination, injustice, deprivation, and exploitation, which are germane to the struggles in the region. On this basis, Osaghae (2008) identifies at least four distinct periods of rights struggles in the region, beginning with their pre-colonial experience.

First was pre-colonial resistance to initial attempts at colonial subjugation, which involved individual ethnic groups[93]. The most prominent of these pre-colonial struggles involved the Ijaw and Itsekiri; the two most powerful trading groups whose leaders (King Jaja of Opobo and Nana Olomu respectively)[94] sought to protect their economic interests and privileges. For the sake of this study, this reference shows how traditional or proto-nationalism within the pre-colonial African (here, Niger Delta) setting is conceptualised as the earliest form of resistance to alien political control. According to Coleman (1958:169-270) this type of proto-nationalism is quite different from modern nationalism which entails sentiments, activities and organisational developments explicitly aimed at the attainment of the independence of colonial territories (Coleman 1983:169-70). With this conceptualisation, it is easy to understand how the Niger Delta struggles are born out of a pre-colonial historical trajectory.

Second was the period of the nationalist struggles in which progressive elites from the region joined forces with other nationalists from other parts of Nigeria to demand independence for the country. This led to the sharpening of regional, ethnic, and religious cleavages and nationalisms especially on the part of the three dominant ethnic groups (Hausa-Fulani, Igbo, and Yoruba) that polarised the struggle and produced minority sub-nationalism (Osaghae 2010). This developed into opposition politics in the regions and agitation for separate minorities' states, which in both cases were directed at the dominant majorities that transformed the regions into internal colonies. The major concerns for the minority groups were issues of discrimination, exclusion, oppression, exploitation, and forced cultural assimilation on the part of the dominant ethnic groups in the regions. Hence,

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[93] Important to note that the Niger Delta geopolitical zone had not evolved at this time
[94] Literature on the evolution of nationalism in Nigeria presents King Jaja of Opobo (Jubo Jubogha; 1821-1891- a merchant prince and the founder of Opobo city-state in what is now Rivers State in Nigeria) and Governor Nana Olomu of Itsekiri (palm oil magnate) as pioneers of nationalist struggles against British imperialism in the Niger Delta (Rotimi & Ogen 2008).

only political autonomy through the creation of separate states[95] could solve the problem. In this way, the minority groups organised the United National Independents Party (UNIP), Niger Delta Congress (NDC) and other political associations, which opposed the dominant Igbo political agenda.

Thirdly, was the immediate post-independence period (from 1960 until 1967), which saw the intensification of demands for separate state(s). The Federal and Eastern regional governments were still against the creation of a state for the Niger Delta minorities. However, the growing importance of oil in the region as the major source of the federation's economy changed the nature of demands. Crucial to this was the 12-day revolution led by Isaac Adaka Boro[96], Sam Onwunaru, and Nottingham Dick in February 1966[97] where they declared an independent Niger Delta People's Republic. They based their action on the problems of marginalisation, neglect of the people, degradation of the environment, and denial of the right to self-determination (Onwunaru in Osaghae 2010). This happened a few weeks after the first military government in the country came to power. Although their action failed, it marked a turning point in the history of rights struggles in the Niger Delta region.

The event pushed for a more focused definition of the Niger Delta political identity and consciousness, and also marked the beginning of a generational shift in the rights struggles, as politicized, frustrated and impatient youths took over the scene from the older elite who they sometimes accused of "selling out" (compromising the struggle) to the oppressors. At this point, the implications of ignoring the situation in the Niger Delta were clear, especially in the light of the growing importance of crude oil during and after the civil war. As mentioned in chapter 1, the military government was responsive and created a separate Rivers state for the Niger Delta minorities in 1967, however, this did not solve the issue of marginalisation of minority ethnic groups.

Fourthly, although more states[98] have been created in the region, we have witnessed the emergence and proliferation of social movements which were mostly built on ethnic identities and organised by

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[95] The minority groups demanded a Calabar-Ogoja-Rivers (COR) state. Also, there were demands for separate Calabar, Ogoja, and Rivers states. To the disappointment of minorities all over the country, the Willink commission (see Akinyele 1996) appointed in 1966 to enquire into the fears of the minorities and the means of allaying them, failed to recommend the creation of separate states for them. It recommended instead that the solution to the problems of the minorities lay in the introduction of appropriate political and constitutional mechanisms, including the establishment of a joint federal-regional development board for the Niger Delta, a bill of rights, and centralisation of the police force (Osaghae 2010).

[96] Adaka Boro (from the Ijaw ethnic group in the Niger Delta) was a Nigerian nationalist and soldier. He was one of the pioneers of minority rights activism in Nigeria. He started the Niger Delta militant movement in 1966 when he declared the secession of the "Niger Delta Republic". His action was the first armed rebellion against the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and has been widely cited as an inspiration for both violent and non-violent movements in the Niger Delta.

[97] For a detailed account of the revolution, see Boro 1982

[98] Bayelsa, Akwa Ibom, Cross River and Delta, carved out of the former Bendel state making the fifth core Delta state

youths. There may be diverging views, but the major reason for these struggles as earlier alluded to is the failure of the federal and state governments to solve the problems[99] of minority groups.

Crucial to the discussion and central to the Ogoni struggle is the absolute control over oil resources by the Federal government (Ejobowah 2000)[100], which was given legal backing by such laws as the Petroleum Act of 1969 and 1971, Offshore Revenue Act of 1971 (Akinjide-Balogun 2001), Petroleum Control Act of 1967, Exclusive Economic Zone Act of 1978 (EEZA 1978), and the Land Use Act of 1978 (Nwocha 2016), was another point of grievance. The laws excluded the communities from participation in agreements with the multinational oil companies, thereby denying them any share in royalties paid by the companies or the opportunity to negotiate other terms and conditions of oil exploration and production. This included employment and other social benefits for members of the communities, environmental impact assessments, and compensation for environmental degradation and other hazards (Osaghae 2010).

As many have argued, it was (and it is still) the abysmal failure of state governments and the federal government to deliver on the political, social, and economic benefits that were expected by the oil communities as well as the excesses and highhandedness of the oil multinationals, that forced the aggrieved communities to fight for their rights. The early 1990s saw the emergence of MOSOP, which according to most scholars (Agbonifo 2009; Okonta 2008; Ikelegba 2001) is the most instructive grassroots movement in the region. A localised resistance movement established with a specific agenda (see next section) and a nonviolent approach that was different with what had been witnessed before.

Prior to his death, Ken Saro-Wiwa led the Ogoni people (MOSOP) in 1993 through a peaceful protest involving 300,000 Ogoni members and declared Shell *persona non-grata* in Ogoniland. The protest sent a very strong signal to the state government; it feared the economic implications that the movement would have had on the country's economy. Amidst the military crackdowns and the killings of the Ogoni people following the protest, there is no doubt that Ogoni's action in 1993 triggered the discussion that led to the clean-up agenda (mentioned in chapter 1) that is ongoing between the Ogoni and the Nigerian state.

Ken Saro-Wiwa argued that the Ogonis and indeed the entire Niger Delta communities faced "genocide" (Saro-Wiwa 1992). MOSOP took the Niger Delta issue to the centre stage, and its action

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[99] Preventing the minorities from enjoying the benefits of the oil resource especially in the way regions are controlled by the major ethnic groups, who have dominated the affairs of the country at the Federal level

[100] Ejobowah examines the conflicting ownership claims to crude petroleum resources by the Nigerian State and by ethnic minorities of the Niger Delta, by giving a detailed account of the colonial origin of the state's control of oil resources and the political context of the conflict. He established the grounds on which each side (the government and oil communities) makes its claims over who owns the oil On November 1969, a month before Biafran leaders formally signed terms of surrender, the Nigerian Government promulgated the petroleum decree that granted the state the control and ownership of all petroleum in, under or upon any lands in the country, and all petroleum under the territorial waters of Nigeria, while the ethnic communities in the region claim ownership to the rich resources derived from their land and challenged the Federal government's collection of rents and royalties..

(seeking political change through nonviolent means) made the region a major beneficiary of international sympathy and support partly because of the international dimension represented by Shell and other oil multinationals, and partly because the MOSOP-Ogoni struggles quickly became paradigmatic of the advocacy of minority and environmental rights and justice in Africa. Okonta (2008:174) describes the Ogoni action as a "Citizens Revolt": …an attempt by the disenfranchised and the impoverished to put the "civic" back into the heart of governance and thus resolve the crisis of democracy and development in the postcolony. Okonta (2008:181) calls the OBR a 'citizens' charter'.

The sledgehammer response to the Ogoni uprising by the Nigerian military government, which resulted in the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other MOSOP leaders as well as large-scale killings and displacement in rural areas, contributed to bringing the Niger Delta question to world attention and support. The momentum of international interest was sustained by the repressive regime pursued by the federal government in the Niger Delta as well as the direct and mostly negative effects of the crises on the volatile global oil market (Osaghae 2010). For the purpose of this research, it is important to note that pollution and gas flaring persist in the region (in Ogoni), and are still destroying marine and farming lives. The people still reeled under massive unemployment, rundown infrastructure, health problems, and so on. The death of Ken Saro-Wiwa only reinforced the Niger Delta resistance to oil companies who, as Ibeanu (2000) points out, invited the police, army, and navy to quell disturbances on installations without recourse to government. They have been accused of buying and supplying arms to security agencies in order to weaken resistance movements. According to Osaghae (2003), the strategy is to militarise the Niger Delta movements in order to justify government's violent repressive approach against the people in the region. This underlines the idea that force was the only language that was capable of attracting government attention. It succeeded in encouraging violent engagement where militant groups like MEND emerged establishing the idea of kidnapping and killing of oil company workers (especially expatriate staff), and sabotaging of oil pipelines.

There have been many movements in the Nigerian society since independence, but the Ogoni struggle is outstanding. As recognized by many scholars, it initiated a different strategy as regards the campaign for social change. Thus, Ken Saro-Wiwa's nonviolent template for Ogoni and to have Ogoni recognized by UNPO justifies the claim that the Ogoni approach is a model for minority ethnic groups in Nigeria. Cooper agrees with Kukah (1990) that the Ogoni "… nonviolent movement for the basic human rights through peaceful protest revolutionized politics in Nigeria" (Copper in Zune et al. 1999:190). Thus, the "…Ogoni Bill of Rights was an attempt to construct a new model of the state in Africa, turning on an inclusive and participatory politics in which the

interests of large and small groups alike can be secured" (Okonta 2008:18). The struggle has established its political and economic interest within the wider contexts of regional, national and international politics.

The Nature of Social Movements in the Niger Delta
From the historical analysis of how social movements emerged in the Niger Delta, it is fair to say that recent movements in the region are built around a shared identity as indigenous people. However, the core movements have been built around ethnic identities (arguably, some have pursued narrow interests). The most notable ethnic movements include: MOSOP which Ikelegba (2001:443) argues is "a civil group of Ogoni ethnic group, which was the harbinger of civil society involvement in the region", Ijaw National Congress (INC), Egbema National Congress (ENC), Movement for the Reparation of Ogbia (MORO), Movement for the Survival of Itsekiri Ethnic Nationality (MOSIEN), and Movement for the Survival of Izon Nationality (MOSIN). Some of the movements[101] operated and still operate as underground[102] organisations and militia groups (Osaghae 2010; Ikelegba 2001; Mai-Bornu 2020).

These militia groups and their activities pose a serious threat to the region and for any democratisation process. As Ikelegba (2001) describes, it is a perverse manifestation of civil society. The violent strategies adopted by some of these groups, not surprisingly, result in deep cleavages and conflicts (communal clashes) among the various movements and the groups they represent. It is difficult to argue against the idea that this offered the state and oil multinationals the opportunity to pursue the divide-and-rule strategies that has kept the groups apart for a long time (Osaghae 2010).

The explanation above does not, in any way, disparage the efforts of the various civil society groups such as Environmental Rights Action, Niger Delta Human and Environmental Rescue Organisation, Oil Watch Group, and Ijaw Council for Human Rights; national civil rights and pro-democracy organisations that have been active in the Niger Delta, notably Ethnic Minorities Rights Organisation of Nigeria, Civil Liberties Organisation, Campaign for Democracy, and Constitutional Rights Project; and international civil society groups, including Human Rights Watch, Project Underground, and Amnesty International (see Osaghae 2010), politicians and state governments as regards their attempt to forge a Niger Delta and South-South alliances on the basis of the common problems centred around environmental justice, resource control, and self-determination. However, it should be noted that while these groups mentioned above have played crucial roles as rights

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[101] e.g. the Ijaw, Itsekiri, and Urhobo militia groups in Warri, the Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF).
[102] Distinguished by their violent, terrorist, and criminal strategies of resistance, which included illegal bunkering, piracy on the high seas, abductions and kidnappings of oil workers, blockage/closures of oil wells, and other sabotage activities, (most of these guys Deebam and Deewell cultist group, see chapter 1 & 4.

advocates and established networks with the grassroots movements in the Niger Delta, they lack (due to their scope) the grassroots presence and mobilisation that are central to the definition of the movements.

The Niger Delta women's contribution is always less prominent; hence it is important to highlight that the 1990s saw a number of protests by women across many oil communities in the region, especially against the background of festering socio-economic problems (Elson 1989; Obi 1997). We can recall the critical roles (they were part of the demonstration groups) played by Ogoni women at the peak of their struggle in the early 1990s. In 1995, women seized the Odidi (Warri, Delta state) oil well owned by Shell in protest against the destruction of economic crops as a result of oil spill for over 10 days from the oil site; the 1998 Egi (Warri, Delta state) women marched on the Obite gas plant (the largest in West Africa) owned by the French oil company, Essence Lubricants France (ELF); and the women (half-nude, ritually baring their breasts) in Bayelsa state who forced the closure of an oil well to protest the non-employment of their husbands and children by the oil companies in 2014 (Ukeje 2004).

The other distinctive, active and more influential groups are the youth organizations: the National Youth Council of Ogoni People (NYCOP), Ijaw Youth Council (IYC), Urhobo Youth Movement (UYM), Egi Youth Federation (EYF), Ikwerre Youth Movement (IYM), and Bayelsa Youth Federation (BYF). Ikelegba (2001:443) concludes that the youth organizations "have been more *mobilizational* in their approach, raised awareness and provided a grassroots base for the Niger Delta agitation."

From the discussion thus far, it is evident that there are common determining factors to the emergence of movements in the Niger Delta: frustrations over the inability of the state to protect the communities from the ravages of environmental degradation, economic impoverishment and the highhandedness of the oil multinationals, the basis of their coherence is the struggle for survival. To borrow Fanon's (1968:165) idea,

> the state, which by its strength and discretion ought to inspire confidence and disarm and lull everybody to sleep, on the contrary seeks to impose itself in spectacular fashion. It makes a display, it jostles people and bullies them, thus intimating to the citizen that he is in continual danger. The single party is the modern form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, unmasked, unpainted, unscrupulous, and cynical.

Though internal factors (such as minority or ethnic-based politics) exist and are sometimes associated with the conflict in the Niger Delta, the most common justification for the proliferation of movements in the Niger Delta is the question of who owns the oil, the state or the people?

Social Movements and Ethnic Identities in the Niger Delta

In this section, I have given an analysis of the impact of ethnic[103] identities on the struggles of the people of Niger Delta. As in other regions in the country, the Niger Delta is home to many different ethnic[104] groups. The most prominent among these ethnic groups are Ijaw, Urhrobo, Itsekiri, Isoko, and Ilaje: the Ilaje and Ijaw communities are the two major ethnic groups. This section highlights in concrete terms how the different ethnic identities (fragmented during the process of colonial state-formation) in the Niger Delta society have been a double-edged sword in terms of regional cohesion.

It is fair to say that nationalism in African countries diminished in the domestic sphere after independence. It is important to note, however, that it survived and developed internationally in the form of Pan-Africanism - a political and cultural movement that sought for the unity of Africans both home and abroad (Toyin & Kwame 2013). It is clear within this section that the absence of a common ideology and political consciousness from the post-independence Nigerian state breeds intolerant ethnicity or ethnic bias (unequal treatment or unwillingness to extend economic, political, and social rights to ethnic minority groups). This characterizes the idea of identity politics as referred to in the thesis.

Integration of Ethnic Groups

According to Comaroff and Comaroff (1991), ethnic thinking or the rise of ethnic consciousness was an outcome of the encounter between Africans and Europeans in the colonial era. With this idea, it is safe to assert that the integration of people with diverse cultures under the common umbrella of new statehood made up the political scene for ethnicity and ethnic identity in Nigeria. Ethnic minority issues in the country were (and are still) the outcome of a political process that provided political maneuvers and leverage to ethnic groups on the basis of the size of their populations (Nnoli 2003; Ebegbulem 2011).

The fact is that ethnic minorities were in a disadvantageous position in the distribution of spoils under the colonial rule. In the case of Nigeria, the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo were dominant

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[103] One of the legacies of colonialism in Africa is ethnicity. Berman (1998:305) argue that "… African ethnicity is a social construction of the colonial period through the reactions of pre-colonial societies to the social, economic, cultural and political forces of colonialism. …that ethnicity is the product of a continuing historical process, which is perpetually in creation. That is, colonial legacy of bureaucratic authoritarianism, pervasive patron-client relations, and a complex ethnic dialectic of assimilation, fragmentation and competition has persisted in post-colonial societies. Patron-client networks remain the fundamental state-society linkage in circumstances of social crisis and uncertainty and have extended to the very centre of the state. This accounts for the personalistic, materialistic and opportunistic character of African politics. Such networks also penetrate institutions of civil society and liberal democracy, undermining programmes of socio-economic and political reform."

[104] Nine states (Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo, Rivers) are considered to be part of the Niger Delta region. According to Ploch (2013), some 31 million people of more than 40 ethnic groups are among the inhabitants of the political Niger Delta.

ethnic groups in the country's politics even after independence. It should be noted that among all ethnic minorities around the country, those in the Niger Delta were of special note, due to their situations reflecting keen linkages between the polity, the economy, and the natural environment[105].

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the formal creation of the Nigerian federation caused ethnic groups to compete for autonomous status and political leadership and it can be claimed that federalism as practiced in Nigeria has failed to take into account the fears, needs and aspirations of the minorities that make up the Niger Delta region. The skewed structure of the Nigerian state has precipitated fiscal centralization that favours the Federal Government and the country's ethnic majority groups. Hence, the overbearing domination by the Federal Government has made it difficult for the oil-bearing communities to gain equitable access to the wealth derived from their own resources. Apart from the most visble impacts[106], ethnic identities and relations have become weapons for contestation in the Niger Delta. Ethnic identities have assumed the character of a mobilizing factor for contesting access not only to oil wealth but also to political power.[107]

As Obi (2005) remarked, ethnicity has also been at stake in the organization of social forces in the struggle against perceived injustices. The fact is that ethnic identities have divided the people of the Niger Delta, often resulting in fratricidal warfare. In the recent past, ethnic groups have acted politically in defense of their interests in relation to those of competing groups. In most cases, inter-ethnic rivalry has arisen over land ownership. As argued by most activists in the region, it is triggered by the fact that the people of Niger Delta have been disempowered and disinherited from their land. The series of clashes[108] in the region are a case in point.

Evidently, ethnic bias, marginalization, discrimination, favouritism and ethnic conflict within and among the ethnic groups in the Niger Delta have given no room for regional integration. The idea of "internal-ethnic" colony, for me, contributes to the absence of solidarity towards fighting environmental degradation and the other challenges caused by oil exploration and exploitation by the multinational oil companies in the region. With this knowledge, it is easy to discuss Ogoni non-alliance with any ethnic group in the region. Also, it could be the reason why Ken Saro-Wiwa sought for international solidarity rather than align with any of the ethnic groups in the region due to the idea of "inter-ethnic' dominance.

Through a constructive historical narrative, Mai-Bornu (2020) reveals, for example, how despite the Ogoni and the Ijaws having similar claims, their action in response to the behaviour of the state and

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[105] For further discussion on the Niger Delta economic foundations and prosperity since the 17th century, see Kpone-Tonwe 1987, 1990
[106] Loss of biodiversity, ecological devastation/degradation, and the destruction of mangrove forests
[107] Ethnicity has formed the basis of allocating government institutions, such as schools, hospitals, and other facilities. Government used ethnic patronage to award contracts, scholarship and benefits. This is sometimes worst within an individual state in the country.
[108] E.g. the Ijaw and Itsekiri conflict, the Ilaje and the Ijaw conflict, the Urhobo and Ijaw conflict, and the Ogoni and Andoni conflict, see Folami 2017

the oil companies are content specific. While the Ijaws blame their domination on the central state, the Ogonis on the other hand stress "inter-ethnic colonialism" ‒ the Ijaw and the Igbos are the guilty parties. Obviously, this reveals the idea that even though the Niger Delta ethnic groups reside within a related topography with similar origins, values and cultures, the narratives and the action taken to express their grievances is specific to each group. For some, it is confrontational and violent while other (like the Ogonis) resorts to nonviolent approach.

Ethnicity and Collective Identity in MOSOP
Considering the argument above, Watts (2005) however, asks the question as to what type of Ogoni identity and political subjectivity did Ken Saro-Wiwa's action posit? As noted before, it was about territory, community and environment as the building blocks on which ethnic differences and indigenous rights were constructed. Watts argued that Ken Saro-Wiwa's articulation was contradictory in the sense that there was no single Ogoni unit, 'we', no unproblematic unity, and singular political subject. And,

> In spite of the remarkable history of MOSOP between 1990 and 1996, its ability to present itself as a unified Pan-Ogoni organisation remained an open question, particularly for Saro-Wiwa. There is no Pan-Ogoni myth of origin…, and a number of the Ogoni subgroups engender stronger local loyalties than any affiliation of Ogoni nationalism (Watts 2004:69).

Again,

> …MOSOP leaders were actively opposed by elements of the traditional clan leadership, by prominent leaders and civil servants in the state government, and by some critics who felt Saro Wiwa was out to gain 'cheap popularity'... And, not least, the youth wing of MOSOP, which Saro-Wiwa had made use of, had a radical vigilante constituency that the leadership were incapable of controlling. What Saro-Wiwa did was to build upon over fifty years of Ogoni organising, and upon three decades of resentment against the oil companies, to provide a mass base and youth-driven radicalism and it must be said, an international visibility capable of challenging state power (Watts 2004:69).

In reaction to Watts' assertion, we can cite an anthropologist who submits that it is impossible to talk about making cultures without making enemies (Jackson 1989). It is impossible to have such a group as a social movement without some frictions among members, as with MOSOP. As tension and conflict always exist not only between particular movements but within them, studies of a particular movement must take into account the relationship between a series of actors: leaders and officials, those it seeks to directly represent and benefit, those affected by its activities directly or indirectly, paid employees and so on. One cannot doubt that there is an unequal power relation between the more and less educated, women and men and members of different ethnic groups.

These common differences shape the nature of movement discourse and activity in Africa (Larmer 2010; Davenport 2015; Beckmann & Bujra, 2010), and elsewhere. It is quite common that leaders of social movements are appointed because of their educational capacity in order to negotiate with the more powerful structures. The result in most cases is that they are unable or unwilling to

effectively represent the people they speak for[109]. Although, literature confirms the tension that had existed in MOSOP, (Okonta 2008; Kukah 2011) it would be necessary to examine the situation from the perspective of the Nigerian political structure that has special interest in the Ogoni issue.

The above analysis speaks about relationship within social movements, which is something that needs close attention, particularly from the point of view of the Ogoni movement. In fact, there is no simple way of identifying or weighing the legitimacy of those who represent particular sections of the society. There is often a disconnection between tacit claims made by social movements in this regard and the actual extent of their legitimacy.

From a practical point of view, it is accurate to say that activities of social or protest movements reflect their origins, source of funding, links to particular nation-states and ideological bases and disparate social forces. A more objective analysis therefore suggests that an educated middle-class activist (which is a reality among many Ogoni activists) may articulate a powerful radical agenda for change which in reality has no effect on the poor people they claim to represent. On the contrary, many grassroots movements may advance their grievances, drawing from on religious or ethnically informed discourse through less progressive frames of analysis, which conventional analysis suggests militate against the development of an emancipatory discourse.

Reflection on the Ogoni Bill of Rights - OBR

The Ogoni Bill of Rights (OBR) is the official instrument through which the Ogoni demand for self-determination is documented. The Ogoni people seek political control of their affairs through the OBR submitted to the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1990. The same bill was submitted to the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Peoples (UNWGIP) in Geneva (1992) and to the General Assembly of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) in Hague (1992). The main demands in the OBR cut across different fields, including ecological protection of Ogoni land, protection of linguistic rights, adequate and fair representation of Ogonis within national institutions. Political self-determination and ownership of resource rights were included in 1993 to bring the demands in the OBR (Ezetah 1997).

The OBR in its preamble recognizes among other things the rights of Ogonis to 'participate in their political affairs as a distinct and separate entity…rights to control and use Ogoni economic resources for Ogoni self-development' as imperative to their survival and existence. The issue of Ogoni territorial self-determination and agitation for social identity to own and control natural resources in Ogoniland (petroleum) through the OBR usually spark arguments and tensions

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[109] These points are an issue of strong debate within movements; what do we want leaders for (if we do) and how do we want to structure internal power/representational relationships?

between supporters and opponents of the subject in Nigeria (Osaghae 1995: 325-326). The controversial subject is becoming increasingly unavoidable within public discourse in Nigeria given that petroleum remains the backbone of the Nigerian economy. The Ogoni people recognized that without agitating to control political machinery of the state and challenge the three dominant ethnicities in Nigeria actualizing their political and economic self-determination as provided in the OBR will be impossible. A radical change is needed and necessary to offset the power matrix as Osaghae noted; 'the failure of the state to respond positively… to protect frustrated Ogoni people ...led them to assert their right to self-determination to deal with the oil companies directly (Osaghae 1995:333).

A close examination of the situation of the minority ethnic groups in Nigeria justifies the OBR as a "citizens' charter". It is "…an attempt to return to pre-colonial Ogoni, where all were citizens and power and authority were legitimised by good conduct" (Okonta 2008:174). The empirical evidence in the analysis section in chapter 4 shows how MOSOP was and is still the embodiment of Ogoni popular will; a struggle that points to a significant development in the tradition of nonviolent struggle for self-determination. The research has shown how the current social, economic and political crisis situation in Ogoni is caused by oil exploration. Ogoni activists are out to address the cloud of pessimism settled over their society. There are social forces that are committed to change, and borrowing Fanon's idea, these problems must be addressed from within and by the Ogoni themselves through struggle, which is geared toward building a working alternative that eradicates poverty in Ogoni.

Putting the OBR side by side with other national legislations relating to land and natural resources management in Nigeria, such as the Nigerian Constitution, the Land Use Act or the Petroleum Act, can be argued as directly challenging the authority of the state. As constitutionally recognized institutions saddled with responsibilities within different areas in managing natural resources are set up and empowered to perform their roles via legitimacy that flows from the state (Abdulsalam 2016). Section 14 of the Constitution vests sovereignty in the people of Nigeria as a whole and not in any unrecognized person(s), or as an ethnic group(s) or unit(s) within Nigeria and the supremacy of the Constitution over any law that is inconsistent with it is provided in its section 1. This explains the non-intersection and non-interaction between the positions on Nigerian state through its laws and that of the Ogoni people as reflected in the OBR. Hence, the Bill is not only considered unconstitutional and an affront to state's sovereignty; implementing the two key demands in the OBR 'self-determination and resource control' are quite difficult and incompatible with Nigerian laws (Abdulsalam 2016). This speaks to the unwilling disposition of the Nigerian state in acceding to the demands enunciated by MOSOP in the OBR, which is considered antithetical to the state.

Conclusion

In order to situate the Ogoni struggle in historical context, this section examined the formation of postcolonial Nigeria, which it argued, has functioned as an instrument of economic accumulation since independence. It contends that the state's failure to deliver development and stable democratic order, particularly in the distribution of resources, is contested by minority groups like the Ogoni who sees the state as a predatory institution. The next section takes up a discourse on conceptual framework, from the point of view of movement relevant theory conceptualised as Ogoni activists' theory.

Section 3: Movement-Relevant Theory, The Ogoni Activists' Theory

Introduction

Despite having common lived experiences and facing similar structural issues, oppression and military crackdown, this section explores why the Ogoni have chosen (as opposed to the violent reaction of the other groups in the region) to respond with a nonviolent approach to this structural and direct violence exerted by the state.

For this research, this section discusses movement-relevant theory as an activist-focused approach which emphasizes the importance of ensuring that research and theorizing on social movements by academics and researchers is relevant to the activists engaged in the movements (Bevington & Dixon 2005). It seeks this relevance to research participants by generating knowledge that is important for their movement. The section discusses Mahatma Gandhi and Gene Sharp's perspective, from which it explores the experience of the Ogoni movement participants' conception of violence and nonviolence in the light of what they face as members of MOSOP moving forward.

Marxism and Social Movements

In order to understand how local postcolonial struggles against dominant power emerged and thrived, this section presents a Marxist interpretation of social movements and the idea of praxis, which is understood as the ongoing experiences of movement actors. The section focuses basically on the work of Barker et al. (2013) *Marxism and Social Movements,* which deals with social movement theory and Marxist approaches to collective action. However, I concentrate on the authors' discussions about Marxism as "born out of the experiences" (Nilsen & Cox 2013) of praxis which is presented in the context of "movement relevant theory" (Cox & Nilsen 2014) to explain movements from below (the subaltern struggle). This Marxist framework, I am convinced, will help the reader understand the Ogoni's position as regards their social struggle for change.

Marxism

For Barker et al. (2013), Marx critically analysed and contributed to popular movements, but in fact, he did not explicitly theorise the term "movement" ir its relationships to other important Marxist concepts, such as class struggle. As Barker et al. (2013:2) observed, there seem to be worldwide "anti-systemic" movements against austerity, against inequality, against the "democratic deficit," and to protect hard-won rights for subaltern classes, all within the context of the world's most important economic crisis since the 1930s. The point is that despite the relevance of historical materialism today, paradoxically, from the 1980s and through the 1990s there has been a turn away

from Marxism and class analysis, including in social movement theory which now neglects historical materialist insights and, more broadly, political economic analyses.

This reaction is associated with the decline in the importance of organized labour since the 1970s, revealing the material underpinnings of this theoretical turn away from Marxist class analysis. As a remedy, Barker et al. (2013) uphold Marxism as a critical theory of social movements understood both in relation to Marxist understandings of capitalism and class struggle and in conversation with mainstream social movement theory. The latter has much to gain from a sustained dialogue with historical materialism, which can be mobilized in the service of contemporary "social movements from below" (Nilsen & Cox 2013:65); helping them to more strategically intelligent action, even while theory is vitally informed by social movement praxis.

This reveals Marxism's approach with regard to theorizing about movements. It rejects the over-determined structuralist models and emphasizes human agency - hence, historical contingency. Similarly, against other forms of Marxism that identify class narrowly, Barker (2013:53) insists on class as a "social nexus of relations" necessarily concerned with contingent, but persistent, relations of inequality around gender, race, sexuality, caste and so on. Crucially, the successes and failures of past movements are instructive for analytical purposes. They point to the challenges, contradictions, limits and possibilities faced by current struggles (such as the Ogoni's) seeking to create spaces for more just human relationships and society.

Theorizing social movements from Marxism

The Marxist theory proposed by Barker et al. (2013) is not the type often taught by post-structuralists: which is a rigid top-down Althusserian Marxism[110]. Instead, Marxism is understood as a theory "that is resolutely committed to popular emancipation 'from below'" (Barker at al. 2013:12); an approach that emphasizes human agency with respect to the production of both material relationships and the ideological and cultural "superstructure". Barker (2013:47) observes that social movements are carried out by human beings who are active agents who reflect on their actions and who seek to resolve problems engendered by everyday capitalist relations.

Most often, the working class and subaltern people do so in ways that disrupt the routine

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[110] In his essay *Ideology and the State Apparatuses* (1970), Louis Althusser combined Marxism with the scientifically oriented methods of Structuralism. He analyzed how the dominant systems enforce their control by subtly moulding their subjects through ideology, which was earlier defined by Engels as "false consciousness" to refer to the ways in which hegemony is naturalized, justified and sustained in society, and to the invisible ways in which the cultural forms seek to ensure the perennial dominance of the ruling class. Proposing that the structure of society is not monolithic but constituted by a diversity of non-synchronic social formations or *Ideology State Apparatuses* (ISA), he employed a structuralist account of the societal mechanisms that inculcate consent and produce willing compliance; and psychological account of how ideology "interpellates" individuals and make them unwittingly participate in their own oppression, thereby dispensing with the humanist notion of freewill. The ISAs are the social mechanisms which individuals take up predefined subject positions which conform to the values and interests of the dominant class. ISAs include social institutions like family, school, religion and so on. Althusser observes that these institutions operate with "relative autonomy" and obtain their power not through explicit coercion like the RSAs (Repressive State Apparatuses) but by implicit consent (See Mambrol 2016).

reproduction of exploitative class relationships, and by so doing, potentially change these relationships and themselves in the process. That is to say that, within capitalism, workers produce "things" but also "social relations and symbolic forms" (Barker et al. 2013:18). They produce themselves through their struggles and as they labour, and it means that workers are, at least potentially, their own salvation; they are capable of bringing about their own liberation from exploitative, alienating capitalist relationships through their "political labour-rebellions" (Collins 2013:332). The idea is that workers do not need to do so in isolation, but may be informed by organic intellectuals from working class and subaltern movements, including but not limited to Marxist social movement theorists.

For Krinsky (2013:108-9), a distinctive insight of Marxist theory is to contextualize particular moments of protest within the "totality" of capitalist social relationships, including the play of political, economic, and legal actors and institutions, both domestic and foreign. As an example, Bond et al. (2013:235) consider capitalism's "combined" but "uneven" development, including booming finance alongside manufacturing de-industrialization as manifest in South Africa. This uneven development, as they argue, tends to foster "intensely localized and self-limited" politics in urban centres, as different sectors of urban society react to the specific, local consequences of neoliberal capitalist politics and policies.

The fact is that dominant organizations emerging from the South African freedom struggle, like those of independence movements elsewhere in Africa, have in the 1990s adopted neoliberal perspectives. This is the case of Nigeria and the Niger Delta oil producing communities, Ogoni to be precise. Although there are forces of resistance that are challenging the power of capital and the agency of contemporary imperialism, the natural resources, basically oil, are still managed by the multinationals. This, along with the machinations of neoliberal policies still put tremendous pressure on the Ogoni and other resource producing communities. Though we cannot claim the Ogoni resistance has caused some substantial change, it is important to note that the struggle has slowed down the capitalist development process; e.g. successfully declaring Shell *persona non grata* in Ogoni has been a major achievement for the Ogoni struggle.

Protest and opposition in "formal townships and shack settlements" (Bond et al. 2013:237) in South Africa can therefore be associated with the reality explained above. It is important to emphasize that both austerity-induced privatization and the protest that rises to challenge it must be understood within the complex of forces. This necessitates the recognition of the roles of multinational corporations and international financial institutions in producing neoliberal policies that see the basic amenities as private "intellectual property". Popular protests and rebellions in South Africa are

reactions to state oppression of various kinds: exclusion, coercion, lack of amenities, police brutality and violence.

Ultimately, the arguments established have formulated a theoretical approach that speaks to the kind of knowledge that the Ogoni struggle can learn to create for its purpose, since "as activists, we need something more from theory or research; we hope for the ability to think *beyond* our current understanding and identify perspectives that help us develop our practice, form alliances and learn from other people's struggles" (Cox & Nilsen 2014:4).

From our understanding of theory or praxis, in this context, it is the ongoing experiences of movement actors, and the learning they take from their experiences to inform future action. A "spiral" model of education informs poor peoples' movements. That is, at meetings and workshops, people share their experiences and identify patterns; then they discuss new ideas and develop strategies to confront problems. It is important to emphasize that after executing their plans, activists must reflect on what worked and what did not work, and then they try again. The PAR approach mentioned in the next chapter adopts this similarly iterative approach and theory of knowledge.

This means that social movements from below begin when subaltern people sense that reality falls short of their expectations. According to Gramsci (1971), there are always necessarily elements of good sense in how oppressed and exploited people experience their world and try to respond to it. This simply refers to people's capacity to come to a somewhat better understanding of their situation as they act, together, to change it.

Movement-Relevant Theory

The discussion in this section draws on Bevington and Dixon's (2005) call for movement-relevant theory (MRT), which provides an alternative to the mainstream social movement theory by putting the needs of social movements at its heart. In this section, I explore a normative approach to what movements should do. Rather than engaging with the dominant social movement theories, I am interested in how theory can be generated largely outside of academic circles by direct engagement with the concerns and questions (the day to day experience of activists) of movements themselves. This is important and an alternative approach that shows how movements, such as the indigenous movements, themselves generate theory. It focuses specifically on social MRT, and it seeks to bridge the divide between social movement scholarship and the movements themselves. As Flacks (2004:138) observed, it is social movement theory that seeks to provide "useable knowledge for those seeking social change".

The current wave of protests or social movement struggles across the globe[111] provides a context for scholars to grapple with important related questions and develop useful analyses. Issues raised by these movements create incentives for scholars to undertake movement-relevant research. As Bevington and Dixon (2005) opined, vibrant movements provide an important countervailing source of accountability for scholars besides professional demands. This provides the new generation of activist-intellectuals, both in and outside the academy, with stronger links to movements.

MRT goes beyond producing more than just good case studies of social movements, by drawing out useful information from a variety of contexts and translate it into a form that is more readily applicable by movements to new situations, which is theory. Movement participants can and do produce such theory. Besides, the researcher need not and in fact should not have a detached relation to the movement. The researcher's connection to the movement provides important incentives to produce more accurate information, regardless of whether the researcher is studying a favoured movement or its opponents.

Since MRT concentrates on issues and questions relevant to movement participants, it requires a direct examination of the discussions taking place within a given movement. Thus, social movement analysis and theory is situated not only within the academy, but allows movement participants to be actively involved in these processes, though often in contexts that is separate from academic discourses. Participants' discussions offer crucial insights into the issues of greatest concern to the movements, which provide an important starting point for developing movement-relevant research topics. From this foundation researchers can identify the particular questions and issues that may be most pertinent for specific movements or segments of those movements.

In examining these activist discussions, there are three key questions to explore: what issues concern movement participants? What ideas and theories are activists producing? What academic scholarship is being read and discussed by movement participants? Within these queries, social movement scholarship would, of course, focus on those concerns related directly to the dynamics of the movements themselves, such as questions about structure, effectiveness, strategy, tactics, identity, relations to the state, relations to the media, the dynamics of their opponents and so on.

For this research, my perspective grows out of my own engagements with the Ogoni movement. In our involvements in socio-economic and political inequality and self-determination issues and the kind of activism to be adopted, I have seen the vibrancy of internal movement discussions and production of theory. From the academic point of view, I have seen the potential of theory that is useful and accountable to movements. It should be said, therefore, that I approach this work with a

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[111] Especially amongst indigenous populations as it concerns this research

persistent hope that the relevance of movement-generated theory can be recognised in the discussion in this chapter and that the idea can inform and assist the Ogoni movements, since my engagement with the movement does not end with the completion of the research, but I hope to carry on with the PAR empowerment process after my studies.

Relationship between Violence and Nonviolence

Defining "violence" and "nonviolence" is not an easy task, and they are words that we can find in different contexts which may also mean different things to people depending where they come from. In this section I focus on ideas that give meaning to both concepts within the research context. Drawing on a few definition or ideas of violence and nonviolence in terms of direct and structural violence and of avoiding violence as a strategy to resist oppression in a nonviolent way, I contextualise the Ogoni struggle, which advocated nonviolent resistance against its oppressors- the Nigerian government and Shell.

Violence

Violence is an issue of humanity. Fanon uses the term violence in several senses. Violence in his writings refers to physical injury but also to psychological and mental harm. It can be instrumental and used as a means to achieve a prescribed goal, but it also has a pervasive dimension that defines the conditions of living and the very reality of all who are affected by it. The World Health Organization (WHO) has defined violence in a most comprehensive and common way as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation"[112]. This definition agrees with Ho-Won's (2000:19) submission that the act of doing physical harm to other people is the common act of violence. He focuses on two types of violence that are evident in diverse social relations: direct and structural. Direct violence is causing physical injuries and the infliction of pain by a specific individual and structural violence relates to conditions such as poverty, inequalities, repression and social alienation.

Africa's history has been characterized by substantial bloodshed and wanton destruction. In the pre-colonial era, Africa was marked by the rise and fall of empires and kingdoms through violence. The process of colonialism and anti-colonialism had many characteristics of conflict and violence, while the post-independence period saw the emergence of numerous authoritarian regimes, which unleashed terror on the citizens across the continent. Apart from the targeted killings of opposition actors and horrendous imprisonments of citizens, what was also notable during the post-

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[112] See: http://www.who.int/

independence era was civil wars (for instance Nigeria, Algeria, DR Congo, Uganda, etc.), where the continent recorded enormous losses of lives from intense internal conflicts.

The scenario presented above runs contrary to the expectations of democracy activists and theorists, who argued that democracy was the solution to the reign of violence in Africa. The present era, which symbolises the era of democratic transitions and civilian rules, has not been isolated from the history of violence for which Africa has become associated with since the end of colonial rule. The democratisation period of the 1990s has seen an escalation of various forms of violence such as election violence, ethno-religious clashes, insurgencies, resource wars, terrorism, and rising levels of armed social violence (Goldsmith 2015).

Although some may conceptualise Africa in negative terms, it is important to assert that Africa's association with almost apparently, endless cycles of violence or war remains embedded in its socio-cultural history. Hence, in order to understand the nature of violence in Africa, historical context is essential. The weakness of the Nigerian state[113] is evidently the reason[114] why the oppressed Ogoni community is agitating against the oil companies and the Federal government. The control of oil wealth is a powerful stimulus for conflict in the Niger Delta (see Okonta 2008; Obi 2006). Obviously, the frustration expressed by the people stems from all these factors resulting in grievances manifested in the form of movement resistance, which is expressed by the different groups in the Niger Delta. The question here is that why is it that despite the supposed direct and structural violence unleashed on the Ogoni people by the state, it chose to respond using nonviolent means to resist. This started by the articulation of their grievances in the OBR, which officially started MOSOP.

For context, Asaju & Egberi (2015) clearly noted that the imbalances that arose from the nature and character of the postcolonial Nigerian state have brought about a choking socio-economic competition among the various ethnic groups which have resulted to violent confrontations that characterize Nigeria since 1960. This has led to emergence of various militia groups in the Niger Delta, Oduduwa People's Congress-OPC in the South-West, MASSOB and IPOB in the South-East and of recently Boko Haram in the North. In the Niger Delta region for instance, Amaechi (2013) writes that from the beginning MEND saw violence as one of the important tools to achieve its goals within the region. MOSOP's commitment to non-violence is all the more surprising in this context.

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[113] Which is due to elite struggles over resources and hegemony, inability to deliver basic needs to the people due to corruption, marginalisation of minority groups and the brutalisation of the people by appalling regimes
[114] Even though violence in the country so often wears an ethnic face.

Amaechi (2013:91) writes that MEND's violent activities have redefined resistance within the Niger Delta region. By resorting to armed resistance, the group has tapped into the local-global quest for survival, justice, equity and right for resource control within the area. Like Boko Haram in the North, MEND has become the most powerful militant organization that operates within the Niger Delta region, in terms of efficiency and use of sophisticated attacks. Its attacks have on several occasions crippled the Nigerian government economy, by shortening down the production of oil and other petroleum products; and the government has often reacted with heavy military crackdown on the region. This approach has led to escalation of violence and more sophisticated forms of violence within the group. As a result, the group has transformed from a minor regional resistant movement to a militant organization which uses different kinds of sophisticated means in attacking the Nigerian government and its allies (oil corporations).

Amaechi also pointed out that for Boko Haram, political violence did not arise as a strategy for goal attainment until 2009. In consistence with its strategy of facilitating the enthronement of an Islamic order within the country's political terrain, the group existed in the first few years of its emergence as a local radical group that consistently espoused radical and Jihadic teachings on how to dethrone the Obasanjo-led secular Nigerian government. (Amaechi 2013:92). With the passing of time, Boko Haram has now transformed into a vicious militant group whose violent activities have assumed the dimension of international terrorism in the country.

According to Okonta and Meagher (2009), internationally the Biafran war recalls accounts of ethnic conflict, starving children, and humanitarian intervention. Within Africa, it resonates with the devastating consequences of failed nationalism, but also with a tenacious demand for genuine citizenship and self-determination. Ukiwo (2009:9) writes that state violence was more important than ethnic divisions in triggering the secessionist attempt of Biafra, and has continued to create rather than resolve ethnic divisions across the country. He notes that the state has not refrained from using violence at the slightest provocation against competing and conflicting ethno-religious groups. The tendency of the state to exercise domination through the deployment of violence implies an ongoing crisis of state hegemony rather than a resolution of civil unrest. Ukiwo argued that by smashing the culture of peaceful conflict resolution, Biafra was said to have set in motion a process of militarization, in which violence is not only condoned but also celebrated and institutionalized as an instrument of statecraft, as violence was the weapon that the brutal military regimes used to keep their illegitimate power.

Ukiwo (2009) noted that Igbo youths have rallied around MASSOB and other groups such as the Biafra Foundation and the Biafra Actualization Forum, mainly based in the United States, all of which agitate for the reestablishment of the Biafran State. The direct role of violence in instigating

ethnic nationalism and self-determination movements is evidenced by the emergence of MASSOB in the crucible of the Sharia riots of 2000 in which about 5,000 Igbo residents in a number of Northern Nigerian cities were killed (Agbu 2004:27). It is Omeje's (2005:631) view that though born out of violence, MASSOB eschewed acts of political violence, preferring to realize its objectives through peaceful means. This method is attributed to the ideology of its founder and president, Chief Ralph Uwazurike, who studied in an Indian university and was influenced by Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence.

Nonviolence
According to Dudouet (2011), nonviolent resistance involves avoiding the use of physical force to achieve an aim, but also a full engagement in resisting oppression, domination and any other form of injustice. This, he says, can be adopted to oppose both direct violence and structural violence. For Martin (2001) nonviolence action is a method for waging conflict and promoting social change. It includes methods such as rallies, strikes, boycotts and sit-ins. Furthermore, Merriman (2009:18-20) opines that nonviolence is based on the insight that economic, social, political and military power ultimately comes from the consent and obedience of the people in society. He highlights six sources of power that leaders and nonviolent movements hold and struggle to influence and claim: legitimacy, human resources, skills and knowledge, material resources, culture, religious and ideological factors as well as sanctions. These sources of power according to Merriman are derived from people's loyalties and obedience pattern, and rulers use this to perpetuate people's loyalties and obedience to them. However, nonviolent movement interrupts this process by shifting the loyalties and obedience away from being supportive of the ruler. Thus, the goal of nonviolent action is to disarm the oppressor or to discourage violence and open a space for more people to take nonviolent action.

Merriman argues that when this happens, the movement may gain legitimacy, human resources, material resources, skills and knowledge, and the ability to carry out sanctions while the ruler is denied these sources of power. And as nonviolent movements begin to shift people's loyalties and obedience patterns, the possibility is that a self-reinforcing cycle may be created. For instance, when a sufficient number of people choose to disobey a ruler, his or her ability to carry out sanctions, gain material resources, or use people's time, energy, or skills and knowledge to consolidate his or her rule will be diminished. The implication for this loss of power is that it leads to more people in society choosing to disobey the ruler. If the nonviolent movement is successful, over the course of the struggle the balance of power in society continues to shift away from a concentration on the ruler and toward the nonviolent movement, which is often more decentralised

because it relies on the voluntary participation and initiatives of thousands or millions of people (Merriman 2009:20).

Consequently, movements gain legitimacy, human resources, material resources, skills and knowledge and the ability to carry out sanctions while the ruler is denied these sources of power. In fact, nonviolent action has been a powerful tool for social protest and revolutionary social and political change, since the early twentieth century, and it can be argued that nonviolence is an efficient choice for movements (Chenoweth and Stephen 2011; Schock 2013). This aligns with Ackerman & DuVall's (2000a:494) account of some successes of nonviolent "people power" in the twentieth century. They argue that there is such a thing as nonviolent force, which is a display of conviction and withdrawal of cooperation: "it works by identifying an opponent's vulnerabilities and taking away his ability to maintain control". That is, "A mass nonviolent movement can force a favourable outcome in one of three ways: by coercing a ruler to surrender power or leave; by inducing a regime to compromise and make concessions; or by converting the regime's view of the conflict, so that it believes it should no longer dictate the result" (Ackerman & DuVall 2000a:501). But it is important to explore what we know about violence and nonviolence.

Considering the notion that nonviolent struggle is a realistic alternative to violence, it is important to point at the arguments other scholars (Bayer et al. 2016; Zunes 1999; Ackerman & Karatnycky 2005) have made, and I agree with, that nonviolent protest can depose dictators or oppressive governments and create democracies. This is in line with the argument established in chapter 1; how Ken Saro-Wiwa's nonviolent resistance approach influenced the return of democracy in Nigeria.

Alongside historical examples of nonviolent struggle (e.g. Mahatma Gandhi's wing of the Indian independence movement; the civil rights movement in the US led by Martin Luther King Jr. etc.), the nonviolent struggle carried out by Ken Saro-Wiwa (MOSOP) remains outstanding. As a strategy, MOSOP presented itself to the international institutions such as United Nations Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the world conference of indigenous people-UNPO, Greenpeace or the British Parliamentary Human Rights Groups (BHRG). These were accompanied by the mass rally organised by MOSOP in 1993. Even though repression attempted to crush[115] Ogoni nonviolence, the nonviolent approach Saro-Wiwa established laid the foundation of MOSOP for future strategies, which I discuss in subsequent sections.

The Ogoni struggle represents the problem that indigenous minority groups face - their idea of mobilization and strategy as regards resolving oppression and marginalization. As an oppressed and

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[115] The judicial murder of Ken Saro-Wiwa along with 8 other Ogoni leaders in 1995 and the many ordinary people killed by the security forces.

marginalized society, its social action begins from the point of view of demand for sheer survival or basic needs. As established in chapters 1, 4 and 5, the emphasis is on human rights, socio-economic and political inequalities, environmental and self-determination issues, geared toward ending a sense of resignation and creating an experience of participatory Ogoni society, encouraging members to link their futures to a collective struggle for social change.

In the following section, I discuss the Gandhian (moral/principled) and Sharpian (strategic) approaches to nonviolence. Proponents of the principled paradigm such as Negler (2004) argue that it is necessary to distinguish principled from pragmatic nonviolence. While the Gandhian approach is identified as containing moral commitment against violence, Sharp's contemporary understandings of nonviolence is based on the strategic view of nonviolence. These two approaches serve as examples in this thesis, and I try to position Ken Saro-Wiwa in relation to the two "ideal types".

Mahatma Gandhi's Nonviolent Strategy
Most studies of nonviolence give significant attention to Mahatma Gandhi's monumental and highly symbolic salt marches that took place in the 1930s in India. The scholarship on Gandhi classifies him as political leader, nonviolent revolutionary and a spiritual figure, but the overwhelming focus in western literature is on his philosophy of nonviolent strategy in solving personal, social and political conflicts. The Indian emphasis is more about him as a nationalist leader and as a spiritual figure. His methods are used in Indian movements, but not that prominently.

The literature on Gandhi's nonviolence is mostly in the realm of history and political science, but it is fair to say that his approach was more than a strategic political method. It was a way of life - an ethical principle - which led to the implementation of a nonviolent resistance powerful tool, which he used as a weapon in India's freedom struggle. Hence, he was much more of a philosopher than a politician (Gandhi 1927; 1994; Sharma 2017; Kosek 2005; King 1999).

Himsa
Himsa is the Sanskrit word for violence. According to Chabot and Sharifi (2013), to understand Gandhi's unique approach to nonviolence we need to start from his broad conception of *himsa*, which is harm or injury in thought, word, or deed that undermines the capacity for self-realisation of any living being. Violence is much more than the direct, physical, and visible attack of one person or group against another person or group. It includes relatively invisible dimensions such as the structural violence of exploitation and poverty, the epistemic violence of silencing subaltern people and subjugating their forms of knowledge, and the everyday violence of routine ways of life that normalise indignities and prevent self-realisation (Scheper-Hughes & Bourgois 2004).

Gandhi blamed modern capitalism for producing institutionalised material suffering that undermined the ability of Indian people to meet basic human needs, which for him, was the worst form of violence (see Galtung 1969). He argued that individuals internalise violence in their lived experiences, normalising these destructive forces in relations to themselves, loved ones, strangers, and communities. So, violence was physical (direct violence mentioned earlier) as well as psychological, shaping interactions with external as well as intimate enemies. Hence, violence was an integral part of private and public life, shaping all human beings, relationships, and communities. But the fact that some violence was inevitable did not invalidate the need to experiment with struggles against avoidable violence in specific situations.

Ahimsa

Gandhi's nonviolence was reliant on the spiritual concept of *Ahimsa* (non-violence, non-injury, not hurting). He labelled this as *Satyagraha* - the "truth-force". That is, instead of battling state repression with force, one should be polite, kind and show love rather than engage with violent acts. The *satyagraha* (Sharma 2017) principle guided his activism against the British Empire and is centered on the foundations of nonviolent action and resistance. As Weber (2003) observed, the term can also be translated, for example, as "passive resistance," "nonviolent resistance," "nonviolent direct action," and "militant nonviolence".

Tracing the origin of this theory, some scholars (Varkey 2014; Ramchiary 2013; Akella 2009; Sharma 2017) observed that Gandhi developed the *Satyagraha* theory during the Indian independence movement and his earlier struggles in South Africa for Indian rights.[116] Nonviolence for Gandhi was much more than an instrument in the struggle against injustice. Thus, *Satyagraha* made nonviolence the foundation for his method of engaging everyone in the pursuit of truth, whether the objective was individual or community development, or resistance against oppressive rule. His strategy is the combination of "truth", "sacrifice", "nonviolence", "selfless service" and "cooperation" (Sharma 2017).

Gandhi built his vision through his experience in handling the masses. The conviction that influenced his coming up with the *Satyagraha* theory was strengthened in various ways: he was very much impressed by two characters of Hindu mythology (Sharma 2017).

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[116] In a nonviolent way, Gandhi used *Satyagraha* for the first time in South Africa to oppose racial discrimination (Indians in South Africa were victims of racial discrimination). He organized the Indians to start a movement against discrimination, which was called passive resistance as different from violent resistance or armed struggle. Akella (2009) noted that the mission of *Satyagraha* was the creation of equitable political, economic, and social structures so as to ensure justice and a dignified and moral way of life for everyone. It involved the creation of a society in which there was complete employment, full cooperation, and democratic participation for all members.

These two, Harischandra and Prahalad (Das 2005)[117], influenced his ideals by suffering to uphold truth without slightest ill-will towards others. He was equally influenced by the life of Jesus and Socrates (whom he thought of as apostles of *Satyagraha,*); whose suffering and death did not create in them any hatred towards their opponents. Gandhi was also influenced by Tolstoy[118] and David Thoreau[119] (Nelson 1967).

Mahatma Gandhi was fond of the ideas he found in Tolstoy's writings and implemented them into his greater worldview of passive resistance and nonviolent direct action. Tolstoy's notions of nonviolence and civil disobedience were based around critiquing the existence of governments and states, rather than particular governmental policies. He remarked that Christ's whole teaching is about emancipation from the power of the world. Power is assumed to exist in the authority of the state and this authority for Tolstoy is highly unjust.

The role of violence in daily life is seen to operate within the capacity of the state whether it be the Roman state, the Tsarist state or a parliamentary state. For Tolstoy, the actions of a petty thief who commits violence for his own gain are not equivalent to those of state agents who commit violence on behalf of a given government. This is because the individual does not defend his actions on the same moral and legal grounds as agents of the state do. Hence, Tolstoy argues we must always question how just and moral a government claims to be in its use of force. For those who accept and follow Christ, love and compassion are the greatest weapons in battling against the power of the world, and it is only thus that individuals can ever follow their own subjective paths to the kingdom of God (Tolstoy 1968). Tolstoy's Christian anarcho-pacifism led to the founding of a number of Tolstoyan communes etc. in Gandhi's period, while Thoreau's ideas were influential on many American thinkers.

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[117] Since his childhood Gandhi loved these stories. A person who himself was so truthful was bound to love the story of such truthful people. King Harishchandra had to face a lot of difficulties and tolerate grief. He lost his kingdom, lost his wealth, had to live in the forest and had to sell his wife and son too. Ultimately, he had to sell himself to the keeper of the cremation ground. On all these experiences, he remained truthful. Gandhi had seen King Harishchandra's drama in his childhood and always had dreams about Harishchandra. Later he wrote, "Even today, reading that drama makes me weep." He said that bearing grief like Harishchandra and yet remain truthful is the real truth! However, Gandhi loved the story of Prahlad more than the story of Harishchandra. Prahalad was not a king but a small child. He dared to utter the name of Rama despite being born in a demon's family. He did not stop chanting the name even after his father pushed him down the mountain and then drowned him in the river. He was chained to a burning pillar yet he was not scared and did not give up the chanting of Ram's name. Gandhi always worshipped Prahlad's truthfulness and set his example in front of him, "Prahlad was such a small boy yet he had the courage to be truthful. One does not need the strength of a wrestler or the army of a king to be truthful." (See www.mkgandhi.org accessed 30/03/20).
[118] Also by Tolstoy's emphasis on Jesus Christ's historical actions in a protest in a Jerusalem temple; see *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, Tolstoy 2006
[119] The concept of nonviolence is frequently linked to ideas and notions from earlier historical eras and ideas such as Henry David Thoreau's Civil Disobedience. Thoreau engaged in a noteworthy act of civil disobedience and nonviolence when he refused to pay governmental taxes due to his belief that the U.S. government was engaged in highly unethical and unjust practices such as slavery (2018).

The two fundamental principles of Gandhi's thought are truth and nonviolence. For Gandhi, truth is the relative truth of the truthfulness in word and deed, and the ultimate truth is God and morality. That is, we are not in a position to punish the other for their political actions. Our duty is only to persuade the other of our view of the truth and the best way to arrive at social truths is through nonviolence (Gandhi & Kumarappa 1961). This is because truth is oriented around human needs that cannot be frustrated by any political actions. As such, nonviolence becomes the central means of political change. This is because violence prevents a movement towards the truth because it frustrates human needs. The goal is to strive for truth that can only be arrived at through nonviolence, since violence prevents the realization of truth by both the resistor and opponent.

Ahimsa and Charity
The ultimate significance Gandhi assigns nonviolence stems from two points. First, if in divine reality all life is one, then all violence committed towards another is violence towards oneself, towards the collective, and thus self-destructive and counter to the universal law of life, which is love. Second, Gandhi believed that *ahimsa* is the most powerful force in existence. Had *himsa* been superior to *ahimsa*, humankind would have long since succeeded in destroying itself. He says, "I accept the interpretation of *Ahimsa* namely, that it is not merely a negative state of harmlessness but it is a positive state of love, of doing good even to the evil-doer" (cited in Bondurant 1988:13).

Love and a commitment to nonviolence lead to a third central belief, *Tapasya*, self-suffering. The primary idea here is that being committed to nonviolence in situations of conflict for arriving at truth and instilling truth in the opponent exposes the practitioner of nonviolence to violent opposition, which is suffering. Suffering may, however, appear to be just a consequence of participating in political conflict, but it has a much more important function. Although self-suffering results in the least loss of life, the best and highest expression of the dignity of the individual is to serve as the method of moral communication during a conflict.

Thus, self-suffering aims at moral persuasion of those for whom *Satyagraha* is undertaken. It challenged the conventional wisdom of meeting violence with violence, signaling a departure from the extremely violent ideologies of Britain - it was directed against the 350 years of the most violent and unlawful colonial rule in India. This set-in motion the process of de-colonization in several parts of the world, specifically, as it informed anti-colonial movements in Asia and Africa (Sharma 2017). Both Martin Luther King, Jr. and Nelson Mandela acknowledged his influence in their political struggles against racism and apartheid, although Mandela's ANC had a substantial armed wing, which engaged in bombing campaigns in South Africa and guerrilla warfare with the South African army in Namibia. It is also worth noting that Mandela's response to Gandhi is surely more as the leader of a successful independence campaign in a multi-ethnic society, (a key concern for

Mandela in the conflict with black nationalists). Gandhi's principles, though in different ways and in different contexts, have influenced movements around the world, especially in Africa.

Interpretation of Gandhi

King and Mayor (1999) argue that Gandhi holds a crown as one of the forefathers of nonviolent political action. In an entirely different historical context, Martin Luther King Jr[120] (after James Lawson had gone to Nagpur, India and studied *Satyagraha:* Houck & Dixon 2006) adopted Gandhi's strategies for his U.S. civil rights movement campaign. He became the leader of the civil rights movement, and is widely regarded as one of the most influential non-governmental political leaders in U.S. history. One of the most referenced cases was his arrest by the state during the Birmingham Campaign. Nonviolent sit-ins along with protests were staged against racist discrimination in the highly segregated U.S. South. King, along with several others were arrested and brought to a local jail, where he wrote the widely discussed essay, *A Letter from Birmingham City Jail* (King 1963).

King accepted being labelled as a "radical", and "…gained a bit of satisfaction from being considered an extremist. Was not Jesus an extremist in love? 'Love your enemies; bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you'". This was his reaction to Gandhi's idea (*Ahimsa* as charity) and he used it to combat the state with love, compassion and nonviolence. The question, however, is: does *Satyagraha* have any significance for the world of the 21st century?

Gene Sharp's Theoretical Framework on Nonviolence

Gene Sharp is said to have studied Henry D. Thoreau and Mahatma Gandhi's theory of civil disobedience in the 1950s (Weber 2003). However, his work classifies him as a pragmatist rather than a moralist. Contrary to Gandhi's idea, Sharp's main purpose is to clarify, classify and define a wide range of nonviolent methods, strategies, and dynamics in a value-neutral way (Weber 2003). He argued that the implementation of nonviolence does not need to have a religious underpinning to be accepted by protesters; nonviolence can be simply pragmatic. Thus, "pragmatic strategically planned nonviolent struggle can be made highly effective for application in conflicts to lift oppression and as substitute for violence" (Sharp 1973). Sharp has been called "the Clausewitz of nonviolence warfare" and "the Machiavelli of nonviolence" (Larmer 1986).

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[120] To better understand Gandhian principles, King took a one-month trip to India at the beginning of 1959. There, he was pleasantly surprised to find that many people there had followed the nonviolent bus boycott he'd been a part of. During the trip, he met with Gandhi's son, cousin, grandsons and other relatives and laid a wreath on his entombed ashes. And he left even more convinced of the power of nonviolent civil disobedience to affect social change. He saw the amazing results of a nonviolent campaign, and remarked that "the aftermath of hatred and bitterness that usually follows a violent campaign was found nowhere in India. Today a mutual friendship based on complete equality exists between the Indian and British people within the commonwealth." He became the most prominent advocate for nonviolence after his return from India. He popularised a lot of the ideas that Gandhi had, but through King, they spread throughout the United States and, of course, came to other parts of the world (Washington 1986).

Gene Sharp's first influential academic work on nonviolence (1973a; 1973b; 1973c) contains 198 distinct methods of nonviolent action offers historical examples classified into three categories: nonviolent protest and persuasion, nonviolent non-cooperation, and nonviolent intervention. The first includes symbolic forms of actions- such as demonstrations and marches, and contesting specific policies or a dictatorial regime. The second involves withdrawal from the system with tactics like strikes, boycotts, and work stoppages. The third entails confrontations with the political system, through direct actions like sit-ins, occupations, and nonviolent invasions, and the creation of alternative institutions and a parallel government. These campaigns achieve their goals by changing the minds of authorities and bystanders (conversion), negotiating and compromising with opponents (accommodation), imposing their will on opponents (nonviolent coercion), or completely breaking down and taking over the system's political order (disintegration).

For Sharp (2009:27), strategic thinking and planning are important because they require calculating "how to act realistically in ways that change the situation so that achievement of the desired goals become more possible". As a result, nonviolent resisters need to be smart, stubborn, and united like disciplined soldiers (Sharp 1973a). His work offers a comprehensive guideline for overthrowing domestic tyrannies and gaining control of the political system (Chenoweth & Stephan 2011). Sharp argues that nonviolence is an active and militaristic struggle. Meaning, we have to have a clear strategy, which he says is as crucial in a nonviolent struggle as in an armed conflict. Thus, it is of highest importance to have a detailed strategy if the struggle is going to be successful and to be able to utilise one's resources and forces in a maximum way. When used to its maximum capacity, nonviolent action is a force that seems to be a fruitful alternative to bring about societal change.

Sharp provides the theory and examples that form the basis of countless political actions, pre-action nonviolence training workshops, and academic studies of nonviolent political activism (Weber 2003). His theory of nonviolence is supported by two elements: "power" and "consent" - a simple ruler-subject model that underpins his framework. State power is assumed to be pluralistic and dispersed throughout a given society. What this model entails is that protest movements implementing nonviolent direct action have the ability to take away the consent of the general population, which in turn results in the falling of repressive regimes and an eventual form of democratic social transition (Chenoweth & Stephen 2011; Sutton et al. 2014; Dudouet 2008). Such a viewpoint is based on a perspective which assumes that political leaders possess a handful of resources and these resources are present in every type of state. Thus, for a ruling group to possess power, it must hold all or at least several of a number of resources (Sharp 1973a) comparable to the six sources of power discussed above (Merriman 2009).

The first is human resources, which must align with the actual elements that require human support for the upkeep of various institutions. Second, the skills and knowledge cover the competency of the population, which must have the capacity to support the government's political goal. Third are intangible factors, which according to Sharp include psychological and ideological components that help maintain the popular support of the ruler. The fourth is that mass material resources are possessed by rulers, including dominance from different economic and financial powers. And the fifth is the authority of a government to sanction or punish those who do not cooperate (Sharp 1973a; Sharp & Jenkins 1990).

Sharp (1980:47) argues that "in order for effective control over the ruler's power to be possible in the long run, power must be effectively devolved and diffused among various social groups and institutions throughout the society". However, his discussion of loci of power gives a very simplified picture. It ignores the possible supportive relationships between the loci and dominant social groups, and conflicts between the loci themselves. For example, trade unions arose out of workers' struggles against oppressive working conditions under capitalism, and were only set up in the face of vigorous opposition by capitalists and governments. Yet as Martin (1989) established, many trade unions have been incorporated into the 'system' and act to control the workers, for example, opposing grassroots worker initiatives and wildcat strikes. The existence of hierarchy and bureaucracy in trade union structures belies the image of a straightforward process of devolution of power.

Walby (1986) also observed that trade unions have been key agencies in maintaining the gender division of labour, often combined with the acceptance or preference of employers for women at a lower wage. Women's groups in their struggle against discrimination in employment have gained some leverage from state power in the form of equal employment legislation. This appears to be a process of one "locus" of power, the women's movement, drawing on state power (the ruler) to challenge features of another "locus" of power, namely patriarchal work practices supported by trade unions.

It is worth noting that Sharp does not give substantial explanation of what he calls intangible powers. Rather, he identifies them as "psychological" and "ideological" factors (Sharp 1980). According to Anisin (2015), however, there is no such thing as an "ideological factor"; the political dimension of a social reality cannot exist outside of ideology and the various competing ideologies as well as discourses that subsist in a given context.

Anisin (2015) argues that ideology is psychological, but it manifests itself as a real force since it is the necessary condition that gives meaning to both political leaders and individual actions. Rather

than assuming ideology to be intangible, it is much better to explore how ideological projects get established, and then assess how they get challenged. This goes contrary to Sharp's idea, which is that intangible factors such as ideology and psychological elements get weakened and destroyed by nonviolent movement.

Nevertheless, Anisin does not say anything about the type of nonviolent movement that will achieve this. In either case, a framework that does not analyze the context of a given regime and its historical period will not be able to explain why certain social movements achieve success or fail in that context. A nonviolent movement can challenge the ideological aspect of a regime, but there is no guarantee that it will weaken the hegemonic effect that it has on the population just due to the movement's nonviolent character.

That is, the relationship between the ruler and his subject depends on obedience of the individual to the government. The assumption is that should the majority of the population withdraw their consent, a government will definitely fall. Hence, the withdrawal of popular and institutional cooperation by the people weakens the power of the ruler, which eventually may dissolve.

Although Sharp's framework is a reference point to any research on nonviolent movements, there are issues around explanation. McGuiness (1993) argue that Sharp's idea of power operating through a fixed relationship between the governing coalitions within a state with the general population misses out on key components of the patriarchal system and gender domination. Martin (1989) criticized Sharp by noting an empirical inaccuracy of his assumptions from the point of view of structural, bureaucratic and technological grounds. Sharp's lack of structural analysis creates a difficulty with regard to understanding his position. For Martin (1989) therefore, the practical results of nonviolent action depend on the political context, but we need a detailed analysis to determine the role of nonviolent action.

Also, Sharp did not give a proper reading of bureaucracy, since patterns of behaviour differs across context within bureaucracies. This, for Martin, is a factor that is necessary for an empirical study of social movements and their possible capacity to effect social change. Political struggles happen not only between nonviolent movements and security forces, but also between the different types of governmental actors within a state. Hence, the "ruler-subject dichotomy" only has limited value.

Further, Sharp assumed that the withdrawal of consent will follow due to a successful initiation of nonviolent civil resistance. However, the withdrawal of consent will not always eliminate existing cleavages in a population, whether between governmental actors, political elites or between the segments of civil society. This is particularly important in societies where ethnic divisions are dominant. Anisin (2015) argue that consent is a serious misspecification when it comes to the

complexity of politics. That, what happens after a nonviolent protest movement encounters violent state forces will not always end up in a political jiu-jitsu. For example, while hundreds of thousands of protesters occupied Tahrir Square in Cairo during the 2011 Arab Spring, the end result was a bloody revolution rather than a nonviolent one.

The concept of political jiu-jitsu is a good starting point for conceptualizing general interactions of nonviolent protests with violent state forces, but its historical applicability according to Anisin (2015) is outdated. Some protest movements have been accommodated, but rarely has a government changed its mind and ceased to repress a nonviolent group. Struggles for power during times of political contingencies are quite complex and cannot be explained just from the point of view of political jiu-jitsu. The different outcomes that may arise from the interaction between nonviolent protesters and a violent state are much more heterogeneous than Sharp assumed.

Interpretation of Sharp

For Chabot and Sharifi (2013) Sharp presents himself as codifying and systematising the legacy of Gandhi, but there is an important distinction between Gandhi and Sharp. Sharp's overwhelming emphasis is on nonviolent action as a method of carrying out conflict with an unjust regime. Although Gandhi's strategies were developed in similar conflict contexts, his major emphasis was more pre-figurative. He put the practice of better forms of social and economic relationships at the centre of the culture of his movement. His belief was that simply replacing the British Empire with an Indian empire would hardly be a victory at all.

According to Weber (2003:260-262), "while Gandhi highlighted the constructive program and downplayed the role of civil disobedience campaigns, Sharp focuses on dramatic mobilization and mass direct action against undemocratic states without aiming to contribute to personal, relational, social, or global transformation". For Chabot and Sharifi (2013) Sharp's work takes existing ways of life and systems of domination as given, and so is easily adaptable to the contemporary imperial mentality and neoliberal world-system.

Gandhi remains a common reference in almost all discussions of nonviolent struggle. But why have contemporary nonviolent social movements (especially in Chabot and Sharifi's examples, Iran and Egypt) largely depended on pragmatic approaches that are significantly different from Gandhi's political ethics? Although Sharp's early work supported *Satyagraha*, Weber (2003) concludes that his best-known texts rely on scientific rationalism and detached realism. His intellectual contribution to the Egyptian and Iranian movements is a clear example[121]. While his work played a

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[121] It is important to say that both Egypt and Iran have their own historical examples of nonviolence to emulate. E.g. Egypt won its independence from Britain early in the twentieth century through a largely nonviolent campaign, using demonstrations, strikes, and boycotts; and the nonviolent struggle in the Iranian/Persian history, both in the 1906 democratic revolution and in the 1979 struggle against the Shah.

significant role in movements against Israel, Mubarak's Egypt, and Iranian revolution, the fact as Martin (1987) notes is that "a simple analysis of the 'dynamics of nonviolent action' leaves out much of the social complexity needed to understand the Iranian events". By focusing exclusively on nonviolence as political technique, without connecting it to particular ethical principles or cultural belief systems, Sharp established a brand of "generic nonviolence" (Weber 2003).

Sharp gives little attention to the multiple dimensions of violence or their effects on moral and political relationships. For him, violence is action that involves visible physical injury, material destruction, or both. He describes how both governments and citizens often assume that violence is the most effective method of action for gaining political power in conflict situations. However, he does not examine structural, epistemic, or everyday (see Martin 1989) violence in detail, and does not criticise modern Western civilisation as at the root of violence in today's world. From his perspective, therefore, nonviolent action is simply a technique of struggle that is active and powerful yet avoids direct violence: a generic term covering dozens of specific methods of protest like non-cooperation and intervention, in all of which the actionists activists conduct the conflict by doing - or refusing to do - certain things without using physical violence. It involves conflicts that go beyond institutionalised political processes with the purpose of using nonviolent "people power" to challenge and destroy illegitimate "regime power" (Sharp 1973a; Chabot & Sharifi 2013).

Sharp sees nonviolence as the most effective method for winning conflicts with opponents whose interests are incompatible. There is a clear separation between means and ends: that is, the goal of nonviolent activists is to defeat unjust rulers, even if using nonviolent means causes the latter to suffer. As Burrowes (1996) asserts, he sees nonviolence as an instrumental strategy for defeating oppressive authorities, not as a holistic political ethics for bridging divides or transforming relationships. Sharp's approach is also state oriented, because it focuses on popular mobilization to reform unjust government policies or overthrow authoritarian regimes. The assumption here is that undemocratic states and elites are the main causes of social problems, while citizens and civil society organisations (those who seek freedom) are the main engines for promoting modern democracy. Contrary to Gandhi's idea, Sharp does not call for long-term struggles toward structural transformation of capitalist economies and liberal political systems, or prioritise ongoing constructive work and individual experiments with truth in local communities (Burrowes 1996).

Bondurant (1967) argue that Sharp's nonviolence approach is much closer to *Duragraha* - "stubborn persistence". While Gandhi's *Satyagraha* prioritised "a quiet and irresistible pursuit of truth," *Duragraha* allowed for the use of any means that avoids visible violence to pressure, humiliate, and undermine opponents. While *Satyagraha* involved truth-seeking, self-suffering, and nonviolent ways of life in order to promote self-rule in the long run, Burrowes (1996) submits that Sharp's

nonviolent approach includes the negative aspect of *ahimsa* with the purpose of enabling "the people" to win relatively short-term battles with "the regime".

While Gandhi highlighted the constructive program and downplayed the role of civil disobedience campaigns, Sharp focused on dramatic mobilization and mass direct action against undemocratic states without aiming to contribute to personal, relational, social, or global transformation (Weber 2003). Thus, since Sharp's work takes existing ways of life and systems of domination as given, it is easily adaptable to the contemporary imperial mentality and neoliberal world-system. However, Chabot and Sharifi (2013) argue that although it has helped nonviolent resisters in many countries overthrow authoritarian regimes within months or even weeks, it has not enabled oppressed people in the world to create alternatives to today's dominant forms of imperialist and capitalist democracy or to reduce the violence associated with them.

Sharp and scholars inspired by his work point to recent cases of success to demonstrate the power of strategic nonviolence, especially to the United Democratic Front in South Africa from 1985 until 1990 (here I note uMkhonto we Sizwe- "Spear of the Nation" (MK), the armed wing of the African National Congress (ANC), co-founded by Nelson Mandela in the wake of the Sharpeville massacre[122] to fight against the South African government; see Zunes 1999), the Philippine struggle against President Ferdinand Marcos in 1986, and the Serbian student movement against Slobodan Milosevic in 2000 (Ackerman & Duvall 2000b; Sharp 2005; Zunes, Kurtz & Asher 1999). They argue that these nonviolent social movements won because participants forged unity of purpose among a broad coalition of pro-democracy groups, engaged in deliberate planning and developed smart strategies, and maintained nonviolent discipline in contests for legitimacy and allegiance.

Principled and Pragmatic Nonviolence
Principled nonviolence is the method where people decide to engage in nonviolent action because they are ethically (grounded in Gandhi's religious or moral perspective) opposed to the use of violence. On the other hand, pragmatic nonviolence is when people make the strategic choice to employ nonviolence because it is a more effective choice than violence (Nepstad 2015; Stiehm 1968). Nepstad (2015) asserts that movements who adopt pragmatic nonviolence may be filled with non-pacifists who intentionally refrain from violence in order to maximize the effect of their tactics, while the advocates of principled nonviolence are usually pacifists.

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[122] The Sharpeville massacre took place on March 21, 1960 in the black township of Sharpeville, where Afrikaner police fired on a group of unarmed black demonstrators who were protesting against the South African government's restriction of non-white travel killing 69 people and wounded 180 in a hail of submachine gun fire. It was one of the first large-scale demonstrations against apartheid regime. Shortly thereafter, the ANC delved into violent conflict against the apartheid regime. Protests broke out in Cape town and more than 10,000 people were arrested before government troops restored order. The incident convinced Mandela to abandon his nonviolent stance and organized paramilitary groups to fight South Africa's system of instutionalized racial discrimination. In 1964 after some minor military action, Mandela was convicted of treason and sentenced to life in prison (see Massacre in Sharpeville- https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/massacre-in-sharpville accessed 30/03/20).

From the distinction made so far (representing distinct motives, goals, philosophy and techniques - Weber 2003), does it matter if a movement is driven by a principled or pragmatic approach? I argue that it does matter, but both paradigms can be adopted in specific contexts. Both have their uses, but they are trying to get to different places. The paradigm needed for authentic transformation can only occur through a principled strategy that changes social structure as well as human attitudes and relationship. Such revolutions are not about putting a different kind of person in power, but about awakening a different kind of power in the people (Van Hook 2012). The concern is that pragmatic nonviolent resisters may remove an unjust regime but as a result create the space for violent ways of life. The only approaches that can establish enduring justice are those that incorporate the Gandhian constructive program, which is about engaging with ordinary subalterns.

Gandhi's enduring justice which is reflected in the present-day India is through the substantial engagement of ordinary subalterns (the Adivasis, Dalits, displaced people, peasants, urban poor, small entrepreneurs and unemployed youth) with politically relevant and timely questions of social justice pointing out the significant inequalities suffered by the common people- their demand to end to repressive and unaccountable government, to reject corrupt elites, and secure their rights. This is so powerful because it does not only explain that the people only have suffered from injustice in the past, but also that historical injustices continue on to the present.

However, following the above assertion, it would seem more reasonable to ask why, if Gandhi's approach is so transformative, present-day India is such a hellish experience for many different groups. More specifically, very few "Dalits" see Gandhi as a good thing. He literally went on strike to compel Ambedkar, the Dalit leader and author of the Indian constitution, to withdraw the demand for a separate Dalit electorate paralleling the separate Christian etc. electoral panels in the Indian parliament. Gandhi's purpose was to retain Dalits within a (reformed) Hindu framework and the implicit threat, had he carried his hunger strike through to the end, was of large-scale caste Hindu pogroms against Dalits. The main thrust of Dalit politics at the time however was to emancipate themselves from Hinduism as the religion which oppressed them; hence the eventual mass conversion of many Dalits to Buddhism as an Indian route out of the caste system.

Scholars (Nilsen 2010, 2018; 2012a, 2012b; Nielsen & Nilsen 2016; Sugunakararaju 2012; Kapoor 2010, 2011, Sethi 2011) have shown how Indian social movements'[123] initiatives have enhanced the capacities of subaltern groups thereby enabling them to challenge exploitation, marginality, stigmatisation, uneven development, environmental and democracy issues. To a great extent, these

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[123] Well-known examples are Chipko movement, Save Silent Valley, Narmada Bachao Andolan, Koel Karo, Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha, Jhola Aandolan.

movements distance themselves from political parties, or try to cut across the ideologies of the political parties.

In the face of highly repressive systems, the proponents of the pragmatic nonviolence approach argue that it would be unrealistic to expect any civil resisters to apply the ethics of principled nonviolence (Nepstad 2015). For Sharp (1980) therefore, the broader population must first believe that nonviolence is a viable alternative to political violence; only then, people can consider and deal with the ethical problems, which arises in the application of nonviolent sanctions. Weber (2003) summarized this to say that activists who accept principled nonviolence can potentially alienate practitioners, and as a result impede the adoption of nonviolent methods. Others argue against the notion that the two approaches are opposed to each other; proponents of both approaches often fight side by side in the same campaign. Though their underlying philosophy differs, they are united by a common commitment to nonviolent methods of action. As Martin (2009) argues, a commitment to principled nonviolence may evolve from the practices of pragmatic nonviolent action.

The basic point is that subaltern movements in India find themselves faced with overwhelming force - from the everyday tyranny Nilsen discusses through to the definition of opposition as "Naxalite" and therefore terrorist (Nilsen 2012b). For most such groups, violence is simply not a realistic choice and would bring even more state (and paramilitary) violence down on their heads. It is only in a minority of cases that violent options make any rational sense. One difficulty with the moralizing language, though, is that it imagines isolated individuals wrestling with their conscience as to what they "propose", rather than what we actually find, which is people in situations where only a few organizing strategies seem remotely realistic.

Both Gandhi and King were strategic as well as principled. It is important to note that the principled approach includes a strategic, goal-oriented one, while the reverse is not necessarily the case[124]. On one hand, Gandhi articulated this by systematically withholding major sources of power from the British who he said had no capacity to rule India; while on the other, King devised a plan for the civil rights movement in the US. As Colaiaco (1993) noted, King achieved victory by organizing dramatic crisis that provoked violent responses from racists. The incident revealed the oppressive situation of the African-Americans, and also compelled the federal authorities to intervene to uphold their constitutional rights. These examples demonstrate the strategic and goal-oriented approaches of Gandhi and King, which can be obscured when both are seen just as representatives of the principled tradition.

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[124] This fits with my earlier observation that nonviolent movements can include people who are not personally committed to nonviolence as a way of life. It is worth noting that most contain large numbers of people who are generally happy with states, armies, police forces, jails and other uses of force; both King's and Gandhi's strategies aimed towards a new kind of state after all.

Misconceptions about Nonviolence
For the sake of clarity, it is important to analyze misconceptions in the discourse on principled and pragmatic approaches of nonviolence.

Neutrality and passivity: Nepstad (2015) argues that the lack of knowledge as regards the difference between pacifism and nonviolent resistance facilitates the thinking that nonviolence is about neutrality and passivity. The common perception is that pacifists subscribe to a position of non-resistance albeit through different means. However, nonviolent approaches whether through principled or pragmatic approach are about fighting injustice, the opposite of passivity or submissiveness. Nonviolent struggle engages in proactive, sometimes disruptive, action for the sake of change.

Nonviolence and institutional method/Negotiation and verbal persuasion: there is a misconception that nonviolent action entails nothing more than institutional methods of change such as voter mobilization campaigns, petitioning and educational campaigns; also, negotiation and verbal persuasion. However, many liberals invoke King, Gandhi and objections to "violence" when what they actually seek to do is to delegitimize anything that steps outside the law and to encourage people to operate within the "proper channels" of the existing political order.

The reality according to Sharp (1973b) is that proponents of nonviolent resistance often step outside the parameters of conventional political action, by engaging in economic boycotts or general strikes, or mobilizing people for civil disobedience. These techniques facilitate the violating of laws that seem unjust. A perfect example to buttress this is the hiding and smuggling of the Jews to safety by those living under the Nazi occupation. Undeniably, they were breaking the law by nonviolently resisting institutionalized anti-Semitism. Nonviolent movements use variety of tactics such as mobilizing an aggrieved people's socio-economic and political forms of power.

Negotiation is, of course, part of nonviolent strategies of nonviolence, but it is not the only technique (Nepstad 2015). It involves resistance to pressurize authorities to negotiate. King's (1964) method discussed in *Why We Can't Wait*[125] demonstrates how direct action can compel an opponent to negotiate and to have leverage at the negotiating table. King analyzed the negotiation between the 1963 civil rights movement leader with the city's business owners explains why they resorted to nonviolent action (see King's *Why We Can't Wait*, 1964:78).

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[125] King's piece on nonviolent movement against racial segregation in the United States, and specifically the 1963 Birmingham campaign. The book describes 1963 as the beginning of America's "Negro Revolution". In *Why We Can't Wait* King explained why he opposed the gradualist approach to civil rights. He asserted that African Americans have waited over three centuries to receive the rights granted them by God and the U.S. constitution.

Nonviolence requires conversion: Furthermore, some argue that nonviolence requires the conversion of the opponent in order to succeed. Returning to Gandhi and Sharp's arguments, while the principled nonviolence argues for change through conversion, the pragmatic approach sees it only as one option. For Sharp (1973b), change can happen through nonviolent pressure where the opponent is forced to accommodate the demands of the challenger even if there is no change of heart. Again, nonviolent resisters can coerce their opponent to surrender by weakening their major sources of power. Withholding cooperation and resources may cause a system to collapse, so conversion is but only one mechanism for bringing about change nonviolently.

A critical look at the argument presented reveals one key issue: a nonviolent struggle does not require one to have any particular religious or ideological beliefs. Nonviolent techniques can be applied by anyone irrespective of religious belief, ideological or political orientation. Thus, most nonviolent movements are composed of members with different religious and philosophical worldviews (Nepstad 2015).

Charismatic leaders and nonviolent movements: some people believe that for a nonviolent movement to be successful it must have a charismatic leader. Based on empirical evidence (see participants' impression of Ken Saro-Wiwa in chapter 5), it is difficult to rule out completely the influence of charismatic leaders on nonviolent movements. There is no doubt that charismatic leaders have effectively mobilized a large number of citizens for nonviolent action. However, Nepstad (2015) argues that it is not only such leaders who can accomplish this since there are enough examples (such as the Arab Spring in 2011) of successful movements without such personalities.

The charismatic leader's gifts and powers are perceived to be divine in origin. Correspondingly, most charismatic leaders view their missions as God-given, or at the very least divinely inspired (see Weber 1968). This was manifestly the case with Saro-Wiwa who himself expressed an overwhelming belief that he was divinely appointed to liberate the Ogoni people[126]. In this context, it is worth noting that there is a correlation between the dominance of a charismatic leader and religious or principled nonviolence. Thus, Saro-Wiwa's leadership position and approach relates to that of Gandhi who was an example of what he wanted others to follow. The big challenge with regard to movements led by such charismatic leaders is that they become easy targets for repression and once they are killed, the movement struggles to survive. A practical example is the assassinations of Gandhi, King and Saro-Wiwa (see Bob & Nepstad 2007).

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[126] See Maier 2000; Agbonifo 2019

Nonviolent action as a bourgeois tactic: The misconception here is that nonviolence is a tactic used only by the privileged. However, McCarthy and Kruegler (1993) argue that nonviolent resistance has been used by people from all class backgrounds, from slaves to elites. Nonviolent approaches are mostly adopted by those who are economically and politically marginalized; those who have no or little access to institutional sources of power fall back on "people power" tactics. However, the historical reality exemplified in the African-American civil rights movement in the US and the Indian independence struggle contradicts the argument that nonviolent strategy is for the privileged.

Nonviolent action in a violent world: There are people who hold the view that nonviolent approach cannot be effective in a violent world. The majority of movements in Africa (possibly due to people's experience with brutal regimes) subscribe to this argument. A classic example (reflected in participants' report in chapter 4) is the experience of the different communities (ethnic groups) in the Niger Delta, where some believe that violent movements are more effective as regards getting the attention of the Federal government than those who subscribe to the nonviolent approach.

As one young participant, said during my research: "our government only listens to the sound of guns." hence, it is impossible to achieve success when you do not resort to the "fire for fire" (strategy of MEND and Avengers[127]) tactic. However, Chenoweth and Stephan's (2011) empirical research gives a contrary view[128]. From their analysis of a number of movements, nonviolent movements succeed more in achieving their goals than the violent movements.

Criticisms of Nonviolence

Fanon (1963) criticizes the tendency within the then nationalist parties in Africa to endorse nonviolent methods in the struggle for independence and denounces their moralist arguments as supporting the status quo. No strategy that would actually be effective in challenging the colonial situation would be perceived as anything but violent, regardless of the actual methods used. He writes that "During the colonial period the people are called upon to fight against oppression; after

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[127] The Niger Delta has two major violent movements- Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta and the Niger Delta Avengers. MEND is dedicated to crippling oil production in the Niger Delta region. It is made up of members of the Ijaw who charge the government and foreign oil companies with promoting immense economic disparities, corruption, and environmental degradation. Its tactics include kidnapping and ransoming oil workers, staging armed attacks on production sites, pipeline destruction, killing Nigerian police officers, and siphoning oil to sell on the illegal market (hlp.hds.harvard.edu-faq-movement-emancipation-Niger-delta). The Avengers is the latest militant group to emerge in Nigeria attacking oil installations in a campaign which threatens the economy of the country. "We are a group of educated and well-travelled individuals that are poised to take the Niger Delta struggle to new heights that has never been seen in this nation before." The NDA proclaimed- "We have well-equipped human resources to meet this goal." It is important to say that this was not mere threat as the group did carry out series of attacks on oil installations in the Niger Delta region, causing huge decline in oil production (see www.cnbc.com-2016/05/20-niger-delta-avengers-who-they-are-and-what-they-want). As mentioned in chapter 2, the majority of their members belong to the Deebam and Deewell cultist (see chapter 1) group that terrorises not just the government but their own people in the region.
[128] See *Why Civil Resistance Works*, 2011.

national liberation, they are called upon to fight against poverty, illiteracy, and underdevelopment. The struggle, they say, goes on" (Fanon 1963: 93-94).

From the concrete experiences of people around the world, especially those surrounded by violent repressive regimes, it is no wonder, as explained above, that nonviolence is conceived by some as an irrelevant and problematic approach. Thus, we can conclude that the misconceptions highlighted above are necessitated by peoples' experiences. In this section, I examine Peter Gelderloos and Ward Churchill's criticisms of nonviolence to give some clarity to the approach of this research.

Nonviolence: incapable of achieving social change
Gelderloos (2007) and Churchill's (1998) major criticism is that nonviolence is not an effective method that can transform social structure. Citing the examples of Gandhi and the US civil rights movement, they assert that that neither approaches brought about any fundamental change. Gelderloos (2007) argue that Gandhi could achieve independence in India but only replaced the British colonial structure with a neo-colonial one. In the US, the civil rights movement could end *de jure* segregation but most forms of structural racism remained: people of colour were still on lower-average income, less access to health care and housing.

As an alternative, Gelderloos (2007) advocates what he calls "tactical diversity", the use of both nonviolent and violent tactics in order to achieve a comprehensive social change since nonviolent approaches are tactically limited and, as a result, incapable of achieving any real, lasting and substantive change. Nonviolence, he says, can only create pressure and leverage but cannot destroy power or deliver control of society to the people.

Both scholars argue that nonviolent movements are rarely completely nonviolent, since there is always the possibility that movements participants erupt into violence; or a parallel group (like the "radical flank"[129]; Haines 1984), emerges and uses violence in pursuit of the cause. The example here is periodic riots and threats from Black Power groups that helped the civil rights struggle in the US to achieve its gain. I agree with this argument especially in situations where a movement is dealing with an authoritarian opponent that does not respond to any call for negotiations. However, it is difficult to see how such a "radical flank" approach works in a society where such strategy can

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[129] Heines argue that nearly all social movements have some form of "moderate" and "radical" factions in their development. The radicals provide a militant approach against the moderate's strategy to redefine the original goals. Activists and scholars have argued that the activities of radicals in a social movement can undermine the position of moderates by discrediting movement activities and goals, also threatening the ability of moderates to take advantage of the resources available from supportive third parties. On the other hand, some argue, a positive radical flank can occur when the bargaining position of moderates is strengthened by the presence of more radical group (Haines 1984:31-32).

easily be turned into uncontrolled crisis; a society where such tactics can easily attract hoodlums[130] who will rather jeopardize the movement's action plan.

Martin (2008) criticized the double standards in Gelderloos and Churchill's arguments. He points out that they have ignored a large number of major nonviolent struggles, successful and unsuccessful. Although he agrees that many nonviolent movements have not gone far enough in transforming societies, the same argument can be used against violent movements. He challenged Gelderloos' inability to provide empirical evidence of an armed struggle that has liberated a society. For Martin (2008), armed struggle rather encourages militarization of a movement, making it more hierarchical and authoritarian.

Martin's (2008) argument is justified when we examine the experience of the movements in the Niger Delta, where armed groups have become the "other" structure that marginalizes the people. Chenoweth and Stephen's (2011) *Why Civil Resistance Works…* also provides empirical evidence of how nonviolence is more effective in achieving political goals than violence.[131] For Martin (2008) therefore, there is a pragmatic tradition in nonviolent action and more coercive methods of non-cooperation and intervention.

Nonviolence: imperialist idea
The interpretation here is that nonviolence is used for imperialistic purposes. That it is the basic tool for white privileged people in the Global North whose agenda is to convince oppressed groups to be patient as they suffer. It accuses proponents of nonviolence of racism, because they take power away from oppressed racial and ethnic people and ask them to strive towards persuading their opponent rather than striking back violently. Gelderloos argues that nonviolent revolts are orchestrated and financed by developed economies for their own gains. One of the commonest examples to justify this argument is the Arab Spring in 2011, where it is believed that the US government provided financial support to the opposition groups. This could be evidence of Sharp's impact as boosters of his approach point precisely to these kinds of US friendly intervention.

Although Gelderloos's criticism may be justified by this evidence, not all local or indigenous movements are controlled by foreign bodies for their own interests. According to Zunes (2008) "…as Marxists and others familiar with popular movements have long recognized, revolutions are the result of certain objective conditions. Indeed, no amount of money could force hundreds of thousands of people to leave their jobs, homes, schools, and families to face down heavily armed police and tanks and put their bodies on the line unless they had a sincere motivation to do so."

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[130] Precisely, this is how liberals and some Civil Rights Movements figures viewed Black rioters and the Black Power movement
[131] Gelderloos (2007) criticise Chenoweth and Stephen of flawed methodology that uses statistics to "obscure complex realities." They restrict their data to political change and do not discuss wider social change.

Apart from the fact that Gelderloos' argument undermines the underlying causes for a movement's agitation, it is unrealistic to think that an entire population would risk their life by engaging in an unarmed struggle against a brutal regime (as in the case of the 1993 Ogoni match and boycott of election) simply because someone asked them to do so. Thus, Zunes' argument resonates with most practitioners of nonviolent struggles in Africa. However, it is important to remind us about the "internal-imperial" structure in Nigeria, where government forces see the peoples' movement as a weapon for their interests (ethnic politics). Nonviolent movements are said to be funded to do what the government dictates. From these experiences, Gelderloos' argument creates an opportunity for further debate on the issue since a lot of movements (especially in Nigeria) are vulnerable and at risk of falling victims to this.

Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Ogoni Nonviolence

Saro-Wiwa studied Gandhi and King and sincerely believed that nonviolent protest was the most effective option available to the Ogoni (see Demirel-Pegg & Pegg 2015). As alluded to in chapter 1, Saro-Wiwa's contemporaries were inspired by his lifestyle, self-sacrifice and the influence he had on the common Ogoni people. Like Gandhi, he became the subject of intellectual inquiry posthumously for the role he played in the Ogoni struggle. Although the foundations of their ideas differ substantially, both Gandhi and Saro-Wiwa's reactions were against exploitation and injustice meted on their people. While Gandhi fought for freedom against colonial regime, Saro-Wiwa's activism targeted the state that oppresses and marginalizes his people.

As established in chapter 1, Ken Saro-Wiwa's nonviolent idea emerged from his witness to the harsh relationship between Ogoni and the Nigerian state. At the same time, there is evidence from literature (Wiwa 2000[132]; Osha 2006) and his connection with the international community. Based on his approach in relation to the 1993 election boycott and the mobilization of 300,000 Ogonis for the famous march that same year, it is obvious that he was influenced by the ideas of Gandhi (perhaps through his writings). Just as King drew heavily on Gandhian principle of nonviolence in his own civil rights activism, we can argue that Saro-Wiwa subscribed to Gandhi's notion of *Satyagraha* (truth) when he appealed to his Ogoni people to engage in a nonviolent method for challenging injustice against them.

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[132] Ken Wiwa (Saro-Wiwa's son) presents his engagements with this father's death in the memoir *In the Shadow of a Saint...* He reveals the complex interactions of the thresholds bound up in his father's transfiguration. Although his primary concern was to provide the truth about his father legacy, his book also contributes to one long reading of Nigeria's post-independence politics. In it, he explained his interest to interact with activists around the world (Steve Biko of South Africa and Aung San Suu Kyi of Myanmar), who must have influenced his father's idea of struggle for his own people.

Saro-Wiwa's intellectual capacity attracted, so powerfully, the sympathy of other communities within Nigeria. This is similar to the philosophy and ideology of Gandhi; truth (common with belief in the Ogoni tradition - honesty and simplicity of life, chapter 1),

and sacrifice (Ogoni notion of community life, common wealth - *Meedekor*).[133] Unlike Sharp whose emphasis is on struggle over power, Ken Saro-Wiwa's disruptive approach was to persuade (e.g. his public speeches, letters, banners) and "political non-cooperation" e.g. boycott of election as indicated above) the Nigerian government to honour the OBR. His nonviolent campaign against the government was short-lived, but the importance of his idea in the Nigerian political scenario is that he established nonviolence as a powerful tool for minority groups who seek justice from their own government.

There are various reasons why people choose nonviolence over violence. Bob (2005), Chenoweth and Stephen (2011) argue that people engage in nonviolent struggle because it gives them a greater chance of winning public support, both from their fellow citizens and the broader international community. The Niger Delta communities who have resorted to armed struggle are tagged terrorist or extremists by the Federal government. This tactic has been successful, in the sense that it gave the government express opportunity to crackdown on such movement or prohibit them from gaining any form of support.

On the other hand, there is less support, even from fellow citizens, without learning about the movement's grievances and goals. Arguably, many Nigerians from other regions of the country have less sympathy for Niger Delta armed movements who are labelled as terrorist and are presented as enemies to the country due to their pipeline vandalization activities. Hence a good number of other Nigerians have the impression that every movement in the Niger Delta is violent. Violent struggle can marginalize and isolate a movement (Nepstad 2015).

Though Fanon gives much importance to violence, stating that the liberation of the colonised masses can only be achieved through violence (Fanon 1963), the reality of the Ogoni situation, as I alluded to in chapter 2, such is such that political violence simply would not work. I agree that nonviolence may not have achieved enough progress for the Ogonis, but it might be a reasonable strategy for a minority society like Ogoni. The Adaka Boro and Biafra experiences are key examples of how a violent approach against an aggressive Nigerian military would not work for the

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[133] The *Miideekor* according to Agbonifo (2019:68-79) redefines the Ogoni conflict in everyday vocabulary of the Ogoni. The word *Miideekor* refers to the palm wine produced in one out of the five workdays of the Ogoni work week (*Deemua*, *Deebom*, *Deezia*, *Deezion* and *Deekor*). The process of returning the one day, *Deekor*, a week proceeds due to the property owner is *Miideekor*, and it symbolises the relationship between the owner of the palm field and the palm wine tapper. A powerful symbol that resides in the everyday experience of the Ogonis, and it resonates with the ordinary Ogoni people. It has helped the Ogoni mobilisation because it enabled everyone, literate or illiterate, to understand the rationale behind the protest, and why everyone participated in the struggle. Also, it projects the Ogonis as the owners of the oil in Ogoniland while Shell/Nigeria as tenants. Thus, the Ogonis are entitled to their fair share as property owner.

Ogonis and other minority groups in the country. We can conclude that Saro-Wiwa made a strategic choice to employ nonviolence because he took into account the implications of a violent approach. Surely, if the more powerful Biafra could not win a violent conflict with the Nigerian state, Ogoni would have had no chance of doing so.

Opposition and Articulation
As established earlier, the experience of illegitimate inequality created by the state structure triggered the Ogoni movement. The question is: how have the Ogoni been able to articulate their grievance to establish their plight?

While elites and those in positions of power seek to divide the opposition, social movement leaders construct political discourses to challenge state hegemony (Hunt 1990; Cox 2014; Barker et al. 2001). For example, there were a number of oppositional parties during the South African apartheid regime (the South African Communist Party SACP; the African National Congress ANC; and the Pan African Congress PAC). While the ANC engaged in armed struggle against the state, the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM, created by Steve Biko) and other internal resistance groups stressed the need for non-violence, at least at the early stage of the struggle (Gerhart 1978), and criticised the PAC's reckless rush to confrontation when circumstance did not favour a black victory; they also criticised armed ANC raids as premature and counterproductive to their work within the country.

The BCM was a philosophical force with a major aim of personal revitalisation for highly oppressed people. It was against "white liberalism", which Biko argued did not justly incorporate the black man into government institutions that were race-based and dominative (Mngxitama et al. 2008). Howarth (1997:72) asserted that the BCM's "affirmation of a black identity transcended the imposed apartheid system of ethnic and racial differences… [and] black consciousness activists and intellectuals expanded the field of universals so as to include the categories of 'blackness' and 'a true humanity' denied by white racism…". This explains how the BCM leaders in articulating their ideology created an identity 'blackness', in contrast with the National Party's (NP) 'whiteness'.

It is worthwhile to relate Biko's BCM strategy to Saro-Wiwa's approach. Though in different contexts, both argued that liberation for their people had to be both psychological and political. Their grassroots approaches appealed to their people and so allowed them to examine the political and historical contexts in order to understand the root causes of their being, and how to enhance their capacity as activists and engage in critical actions to build power and seek liberation. Their strategies empowered the youth by providing the opportunity to reflect on what impacted their daily life and choices, and tapping into their creativity and determination to find workable alternatives

that will allow them arrive at solutions that benefit their lives. The determination and resistance of MOSOP in the last 25 years is a clear example of youth interested in how their society is managed.

Although the Ogoni struggle has faced severe state violence, Saro-Wiwa's precise message revealed the social reality and contradictions of government discourse; it has helped the Ogoni people to regain confidence and psychological strength. As such, one can argue that the approach achieved a political triumph, in the sense that the Ogoni case has since then become a basic ground on which minority ethnic groups make their case in the country.

Thus, social movement scholars (Ganz 2010; Polletta 1998a, 1998b; Davis 2002) emphasised the power of story with regards to the success of social movements. A story can articulate the challenge faced by the group in order to prepare movement participants to confront the challenge. For Ganz (2010), people gain a sense of agency through identifying with a story as well as with a set of values, which should be understood not as abstractions, but as reflecting emotional relationships to experiences, objects, and people.

This means that the narratives of successful movements inspire urgency and protect participants from fear, isolation, and self-doubt. Furthermore, Ganz opined that working with people allows us to construct a three-way narrative: a story of "self" - an articulation through narrative of why you have been called to what you have been called to; a story of "us" - a way of bringing alive the values shared by the community being mobilized; and a story of "now" - a way of making real the challenge to the values that demands urgent action. That is to say, a complete narrative moves people to asking questions as to why they are doing what they are asked to do, what is at stake, and why they care. Since this is about taking action that will address a problem, strategy becomes the necessary step to take. Hence, Ogoni demand for benefits from the Nigeria state through MOSOP falls within the context of searching for their political voices as an oppressed and marginalized minority in the country. Their collective view is that their political participation in Nigeria should be pursued through the OBR (1990).

If narrative does the emotional work of movement building, strategy figures out how to turn what people have (resources) into what they need (power) in order to achieve their goal. As Ganz (2010) established, effective movement strategy equips people with the resources and the capacity to be strategists. People go through life telling stories and strategizing but implicitly; Ganz purposely brings intentionality and purpose to these actions and directs it to the community's goal. And since social movements are not always on the winning side, they must compensate in resourcefulness what they lack in conventional resources. Hence, people become the fundamental source of power of a social movement whether they choose to walk to work instead of taking a bus in Montgomery, Alabama; or defy British rule by making their own salt in India; or boycott an election (organized

by the military dictator Ibrahim Babangida) as the Ogoni did in 1993. The event shook the military institution and challenged its legitimacy (see Kukah 2011). Unless a movement's story, strategy and relational foundation are turned into effective action, there will be no substantial change.

State Repression of Dissent

In his attempt to establish understanding about the relation between state and violence, Weber (2009) conceptualized the idea of governmental "monopoly on violence." That is, states will seek a monopoly, not over violence (there will be crime etc.) but over *legitimate* violence (that exercised by the police and soldiers). Thus, state repression is the enactment of coercion and violence by agents of the state, or in some cases, the direct actions of the government itself (like the use of military agents for ruthless operation as in the case of Ogoni). Repression can be inflicted on individual civilians or groups in soft or harsh forms.

Davenport (2015; 2007) explores how mobilization affects levels of state repression and vice versa. He established new categories (*external forces* - political repression and *internal dynamic s-*factionalisation - see Davenport 2015) as regards the rise and demise of social movement organizations. He argues for a co-evolutionary dynamic whereby challengers influenced by their understanding of what the state will do to oppose them, attempt to recruit, motivate and prepare constituents, while the government attempt to hinder the process at the same time.

The argument here is whether repression increases dissent or decreases it. Sharp's (1973c) concept of political *jiu-jitsu* speaks directly to the connection between repression and dissent. Sharp was the first to emphasize the inconclusiveness produced by a variety of studies around repression and dissent. Ziegenhagen (1986) argued that repression increased dissent, while Muller (1985), Regan and Henderson (2002) opined that there was a U-shaped relationship between repression and protest. Hibbs (1973) argued that repression on the whole shut down dissent. The killing of Ken Saro-Wiwa and many other Ogonis, and oppressing local communities for supporting the campaign, helped the state to penetrate the movement limiting its ability to mobilize. As the research findings show, the government has been able to polarize the movement, thereby co-opting some members of the movement through financial payments while simultaneously integrating other moderate factions into the government.

Shadmehr and Bernhardt (2011) argue that the entire subfield of the protest-repression literature comprised of game theory and the formal modelling is based around the notion that there are repeated (tit-for-tat) interactions between protest and state, which take place during times of civilian upheaval. Although not directly, Lichbach (1987) stressed Sharp's political *jiu-jitsu* and the specific outcome of accommodation. He argued that when domestic dissent arises, states will either

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accommodate and accept the demands of opposition or repress it. His study was based upon a choice-theoretical approach where he examined both state repression and state accommodation, and established that when a given government uses consistent policies such as consistent repression or consistent accommodation, dissent will decrease. On the other hand, inconsistency on the part of the government sends mixed messages to dissidents and will as a result increase protest.

An analysis that captures the Ogoni situation more accurately is Ho-Won's (2000; also see Galtung 1969) notion of structural violence explained earlier - the inequitable distribution of resources and the damaging after-effects of oil exploration and exploitation experienced over long periods of time. Also important for the Ogoni situation is Davenport's (2007) definition of second-generation (such as economic, social, and cultural privileges) and third-generation rights (like the right to peace and a clean environment).

How can a social movement be successful in such situations? From my interaction with social movement activists in the research field, it is important to assert that individuals are rational in the context of protest. They must assess their chances of being successful against a state and rebel when it is least costly to do so. Olson (1971) argues that this is one of the most important indicators of whether a social movement will succeed or not. Nevertheless, Dubofsky (2000) observed a weakness with the approach. Many studies focussing on the costs arising from repression miss out on the changing nature of historical political struggle; they do not tell us why workers' movements were heavily repressed in late 19th and early 20th century U.S. history but still rebelled afterwards.

State repression as imposing costs
In his analysis of coercion in conflict studies, Schelling (1960) articulated the notion of imposing costs on civilians, groups or organizations; that coercion whether imposed by states, organizations or individuals, incurs costs upon a civilian for the purpose of trying to change their behaviour. Langdon (2020: 43) notes that African nation-states claim legitimacy and supremacy in deciding how people should live at the local level because of their greater claims to generalizability. Relating this to the Ogoni experience, we can argue that severe state violence incurs costs upon the people. This is visible in the routine gas flaring and military brutality forcing the people to seek medical treatment and other forms of aid that are not available. Also, it has taken away bread earners[134] from a given family and creates immense hardships for the family.

The harsh response has consistently left the people with fewer or no resources and more grievances. This experience as articulated by participants makes one to infer that state sponsored and initiated

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[134] A concrete example here is that of the famous Ogoni widow, Esther Barinem Kiobel, and other three women (wives to four amongst the Ogoni 9 activists murdered by the Nigerian government). These launched a civil case against Shell Oil Company in the Netherland in 2017 for being complicit in the 1995 killings of their husbands (see www.business-humanrights.org-shell-lawsuit-re-nigeria-kiobel-wiwa). The reality of so many in Ogoniland whose loved ones and breadwinners are taken away from them.

violence against the people is highly symbolic and meaningful phenomenon because it has shaped the Ogoni thinking towards liberation. This points directly to what MOSOP has contributed to the Ogoni struggle. Through its nonviolent campaign, it highlights the ongoing need of Ogoni activists to think, reflect and take actions on how internal colonialism embedded within the social structures by the dominant institutions (government and Shell) can be defeated. Also, the Ogoni context reveals another dynamic phenomenon. While the analyses above made the distinction of state repression empirically manifesting itself as both violent and nonviolent, the people are subjugated to inevitable violence and in daily life (the uncontrolled gas flaring), which is often unnoticed and hidden when compared to more refined forms of violence.

My interpretation of participants' voices allows for the claim that violence must not be in physical form but can also be also highly psychological (see Sharp above). As such, the state repressive approach against the Ogoni people is not limited to the physical killing, beating, arresting or torturing of the activists, but active in their everyday life. This insight has allowed us to see the close connection between the Ogoni social world and their effort to create a platform that will facilitate social change.

Ogoni Application of Pragmatic or Principled Strategy
From the empirical evidence in chapter 5, the Ogoni nonviolent approach does not exclusively rely on the philosophies of principled or pragmatic nonviolence; nor is it the same as pacifism. Unlike Gandhi's Indian movement and the U.S. civil rights movement where the role and impact of (faith motivated) beliefs in and practice of nonviolence were central to large numbers of participants in securing political freedom and civil liberties, Ogoni do not see it as a sole prerequisite for engaging in nonviolent struggle. Though their traditional religious belief, explained earlier, is central to their sense of justice, both strategies can work side by side. So, it is the behaviour that defines a nonviolent movement, not the convictions of its participants (Miller 2006).

Obviously, Gandhi realized that it was unlikely that an entire population could adopt religious or spiritual views similar to his own; and more importantly, there was not enough time to wait for the conversion of thousands of villages, even if it were possible. He never expected that all Indians would live by the personal standards that he set for himself, but he always maintained a keen eye on how nonviolent action will turn into political reality (Miller 2006). My interpretation of Saro-Wiwa is that he followed the same approach; like Gandhi, his writings show that he wanted nonviolence as a policy, not necessarily as an absolute creed affecting all spheres of Ogoni life. Being purposive, Saro-Wiwa organized and coordinated the Ogoni in an attempt to compel the state and transform the status quo through civil disruption and pressure (Sharp 2005) by the international community (particularly the United Nations and Greenpeace). In his words:

> The UN recognises the rights of all the world's indigenous people, the indigenous people have been cheated through laws such as are present in Nigeria today. Through political marginalization, they have driven certain people to death. That happened in America and Australia. They are trying to repeat it in Nigeria and we don't want it. In recovering the money that has been stolen from us, I do not want any blood spilled, not of an Ogoni man, not of any strangers among us. We are going to demand our rights peacefully, nonviolently, and we shall win (Saro-Wiwa 1995a).

African history reveals nonviolent action that draws upon distinctly African cultural practices. This means that methods and strategies of nonviolent struggle are natural, intuitive, and acceptable in a given society and they provide an excellent launching point as claimed about Ken Saro-Wiwa earlier. Although novelty and even shock can at times be appropriate and effective, it is usually not wise to start with surprise. Strikes, processions, vigils, symbolic clothing, occupation of particular sites, and even hunger strikes have become fairly permanent tools in the repertoires of civic resistance throughout Africa. Any group hoping to overcome their grievances or to achieve particular goals takes into consideration the traditions and practices of its own culture. Although comparing principles and methods found in struggles elsewhere and abroad can be useful, any external theories and practices must always be combined sensitively and appropriately with the cultural and political aspects of communal, regional, and national experiences.

Ogoni: Leadership in social movement
Drawing on previous analysis on nonviolent struggle, the charisma and exceptional leadership skills of Gandhi and King were quite unique. Gandhi and King came from comparatively modest backgrounds but eventually emerged as forceful leaders. In his unique context, it is hard not to identify Saro-Wiwa's approach within such significant and historic nonviolent struggles. As I argued earlier, from his personal study and influence from the two personalities, he employed a nonviolent approach to give Ogoni a voice in Nigeria. He possessed the ability to transmit knowledge, inspire, and motivate action. He influenced the people through various means, including acting as a role model. This helps to explain one phenomenon as regards Ogoni struggle for justice against oppression and marginalisation. It is therefore right to conclude that his approach has established "knowledge", which is a view of the Ogoni as an oppressed people.

Although the gift of charisma can be a good force for a movement, its effectiveness may not last especially if such figure is arrested or killed. The energy or fate of a movement can fade with the person's absence (see Bob & Nepstad 2007). For the Ogoni movement, leadership is crucial as complex network of leadership is needed to create a cohesiveness aimed at achieving their common goal. But from the experience of Saro-Wiwa's murder, a leader must not be the face of the struggle such that his absence becomes a major setback to the movement. Apart from MOSOP, which is an organised structure tied to the idea of leadership, other nonviolent struggles in Nigeria appear to move away from the idea of having a leader. This is due to the fear that the authoritarian regime

may crush the leader to dismantle the group. However, people with the capacity of Ken Saro-Wiwa move forward to stir popular imagination and substantially contribute to a nonviolent movement's sources of power, particularly human resources and skills and knowledge (Miller 2006).

Ogoni Nonviolent methods
One thing to consider so strongly is the interplay between the contexts, networks and practice that produced a creative grassroots movement that, in spite of the limitations (because of the political constraints imposed on it), has maintained its campaign of nonviolent activism. Ogoni has been able to create contentious practices in the face of sustained repression. The nature of the Ogoni nonviolent approach is unique and as evidence in the research participants' language, government and Shell may be compelled to concede due to the pressure from the nonviolent activities adopted.

From these arguments, I agree that a complete victory or favourable alteration of power relationships is sought through total non-cooperation, one of numerous methods used in the Ogoni nonviolent struggle. One important point is that individual methods, even the most powerful, attractive, or common, should not be confused with the collective form of struggle in general. Such assumptions can lead to misrepresentations that may attribute success, but more often failure, to nonviolent methods. Thus, the Ogoni nonviolent method, which faces a harsh, violent response from the Government, must be open to creating an asymmetrical relationship with its oppressor.

It is clear that the violent approach against the Ogoni has compelled them to increase their discipline, determination and conviction. This is a process referred to as political *jiu-jitsu*. Rather than view the violent reaction of the Government as a setback or defeat, the Ogoni nonviolent movement must consider its response as a positive indication that they are posing a true challenge to the existing power relationships at the root of their grievance or inequity. As so many of the participants reported, they must be aware of the deliberate efforts to undermine their nonviolent discipline, such as through the militarization of Ogoniland. As observed by many participants of the research, the Ogoni nonviolent movement must adhere to essential insights on nonviolent struggle.

Conclusion

Drawing from the research experience and theorising by participants, and also the literature review, I have explored the relationship between violent and nonviolent approaches as practical choices facing Ogoni activists. I discussed how these are conceptualised in Gandhi's and Sharp's theories as a basis for understanding the Ogoni nonviolent struggle.

The discussion in this chapter has explored the case of a grassroots movement through which a minority group found its voice and advanced its interests in organised action. The thesis established

how Ogoni activists find their actions regulated by government repression, but have been led and supported by the majority of the Ogoni population who have given large amounts of time and energy to secure justice. What is important to know about the Ogoni struggle, is that it is rooted in conceptions that advance justice and human rights, and commitment to the ideas of change through nonviolent means.

Chapter 3:

Participatory Action Research (PAR):

Theoretical Interpretation of Methodology and Methods

Introduction

Since PAR is central to this thesis, this chapter explores the understanding of this methodology and demonstrates its usefulness to this research. The epistemology which underpins PAR is distinctive in that it rejects the notion that knowledge can be de-contextualized from its context of practice. The chapter provides the reader with a comprehensive theoretical underpinning of PAR methodology and methods in the context of my research objectives and questions. It explains the research paradigm (ontology, epistemology and methodology), data collection methods, methods used for data analysis and ethical approach adopted in the thesis. I explain how my choice of methodology was influenced by my ontological and epistemological values, and how the ontological, epistemological and methodological values came to be synthesized, transformed and articulated for our understanding of the PAR process. Chapter 4 will discuss the PAR research experience in Ogoni.

The chapter demonstrates how PAR produces knowledge which is valid and relevant because of its inclusion of popular knowledge and science and the participation of the people experiencing the problems studied (Fals-Borda & Rahman 1991); in this case, the Ogoni participants. As Guba & Lincoln (2005) argue, the choice of research approach depends on the nature of the problem. Burgoyne and Cooper (1975) stated that the choice of methodology has long been recognized as a crucial component of research. This is because it clearly defines the theoretical framework of a given research project. It helps the researcher to identify appropriate methods for data collection, analysis and to draw logical conclusions to solve the research problems. Lincoln and Guba (2000) argue that the theoretical assumptions of a researcher form the primary foundation of the researcher's worldview.

Rationale for Using PAR

PAR is a methodology that is increasingly used in the developing world and all areas that experienced colonisation, representing a "new epistemology of practice grounded in people's struggles and local knowledges" (Kindon et al. 2010:10); PAR is an emerging space of democratic knowledge production (Langdon 2020). The transformative nature of PAR is based on a worldview of reality and knowledge that emerges from the people. Hence it is a crucial way that knowledge

production within a movement takes shape through the generation of collective narratives of the struggle. Proponents of PAR believe that the creation and depiction of knowledge influence our understanding of reality, and that those who control these processes wield considerable power. Yet power and influence are not fairly distributed and much in society is unjust. Proponents also believe that research is not neutral and has a role to play in social justice.

Given that many people in our world, especially those covered by this research, are oppressed, research ought to serve to improve their situation. The PAR paradigm is clearly not for everyone or for every situation, but it does have a place in social research and action for improved development. Hence, the decision to use PAR for this research was based both on my own beliefs and interest in this approach, as well as its suitability for this particular initiative.

Apart from its influence on the research participants as regards building their knowledge and capacity for their struggle, the PAR learning process, I believe, will continue after my PhD research as I return to my priestly pastoral ministry. This position is informed by my belief that the quality of PAR is judged by "multiple perspectives of knowing" including "appropriate methods and theories and connecting the researcher's [my] own judgments to discussion in the current literature" (Zuber-Skerritt & Fletcher 2007:418). As Weick (2002) points out, the idea of multiple perspectives suggests that I take myself less seriously by doing less stereotyping and engaging in more dialogues. Multiple perspectives and methods are particularly imperative because, as a researcher in my own country, but from a different culture, I needed to play the dual roles of an "insider" and "outsider" researcher with consequent challenges regarding pre-understanding, access, politics and ethics (Coghlan & Brannick 2005; Coghlan 2001)[135].

Research Paradigm

Researchers seeking to understand human behaviour have not only an array of research methods from which to choose, but more fundamentally, a choice of paradigms, which are mental windows or lenses through which we view the world. They are composed of certain belief categories, principally our understanding of the nature of reality (ontology), the nature of knowledge (epistemology), and the philosophy of the research process (methodology) which includes the assumptions and values that serve as a rationale for research.

Methodology implies so much more than the methods used in collecting data. I believe that research should not be methodologically led; rather methodological choice should depend on the researcher's theoretical stance and the social science phenomenon to be investigated. In this research, my choice

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[135] See detailed explanation in chapter 4.

of a constructivist action research approach is a direct result of the dynamic reality that I am investigating. This is why I use PAR, which seeks not just to interpret this social construction of reality but to see the capacity to transform the Ogoni oppressive structure.

The Ontological Assumption
According to Crotty (2003:10) ontology is "the study of being", and it is concerned with "what kind of world we are investigating, with the nature of existence, with the structure of reality as such". For Guba and Lincolin (1989:83), ontological assumptions are those that respond to the question 'what is there that can be known?' or 'what is the nature of reality?' With these definitions, it is worth identifying the ontology of this research.

This research uses an ontology which is essentially of a social world of meanings. For example, the Ogoni world, which is the focus of this research is a world populated by human beings who have their own thoughts, interpretations and meanings. Thus, my investigation of this world is clearly manifested in my use of different interpretive research methods and techniques such as semi-structured interviews and focus groups in order to interpret participants' feelings and inner thoughts.

The Epistemological Assumption
Epistemology is "a way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know" (Crotty 2003:3). It is also "concerned with providing a philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible and how we can ensure that they are both adequate and legitimate" (Maynard in Crotty 2003:8).

The epistemological stance used in this research is constructionism, which Crotty (2003:42) defines as "the view that all knowledge and therefore all meaningful reality as such is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context." This entails that meaning is not discovered, but constructed; human behaviour is multi-layered and it cannot be determined by pre-defined probabilistic models. It depends on situations and is determined by environmental factors other than the genes. Thus, human behaviours are affected by several factors and are mostly subjective in nature.

Social Constructivist Approach: there are two basic paradigmatic approaches in social science research, namely, positivism and constructivism (Guba & Lincoln 1994). While some scholars cling strictly to the functionalist and positivist paradigms (Donaldson 2008) as producing knowledge for its own sake as in natural science disciplines (Bryman 2006), others focus on literary style and subjectivist approaches, which recognise multiple constructions pertaining to the subjective meaning of individual experiences (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Poth 2018; Van Maanen 1995), and

that encourage actionable knowledge (Argyris 1996). While the former paradigm starts with hypotheses and uses experimental designs and measurement techniques to verify or falsify truth about causality, the latter invents through meaning-making, reflexivity, conversation and sense-making with understanding in view (Easterby-Smith et al. 2008).

As I alluded above, the constructivist approach is based on socio-cultural construction of 'realities' and knowledge co-constructed through interaction between participants and researchers (Etherington 2007). Within the subjectivist stance and the social constructionist perspective, I am using PAR. This is because of its democratic and liberating (Koch & Kralik 2006) approach to knowledge, which is familiar to me and as it has been the kind of approach I have engaged with in my pastoral ministry as a priest, engaging people to generate knowledge that is capable of solving their social problems.

The theoretical underpinning of constructivism is that the researcher and social world are parts of the same system such that they influence each other. It means that facts and values cannot be separated and findings are essentially value-bound, and influenced by the researchers' perspectives (Guba & Lincoln 1994; Creswell 1998). Accordingly, it is not possible to conduct a value-free and objective assessment of the social world. As Baum et al. (2006) argue, PAR is explicitly politicised and avoids modernist claims to objectivity and value-free theorising. It redefines the privileged relationship between researchers and knowledge production by putting participants at the centre of their own process of knowledge generation. However, the researchers' assumptions must be declared. This is particularly appropriate in social science inquiry because human society is not governed by fixed natural laws or regularities, but mediated through meaning and agency.

Thus, the social constructivist paradigm helps us (researcher and participants) to explore the Ogoni social reality under investigation rather than a "generalised causal relationship" (Ormston et al. 2013). The approach creates the opportunity for interaction for the purpose of generating knowledge as regards how the social world of the Ogoni is experienced, understood and interpreted within the context of the research questions.

Brief History of PAR
Grown out of the work of diverse community researchers[136], PAR is a qualitative research methodology option (MacDonald 2012). Although there are a number of interpretations of the roots of contemporary PAR, studies have traced it to the early post-war period; its role in the struggles faced by many in resisting colonialism[137]; and arguing for the inclusion of local knowledge in development (Hall 1982, 1992). It is a broad and constantly evolving methodological framework

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[136] See Fals-Borda 1979, 2001, a prominent critic of Western dominance.
[137] See Freire 2000, 2007; Fals-Borda 1979.

covering a spectrum of approaches and procedures (Kesby et al. 2009; Fals-Borda 1979, 1991; Weis & Fine 2004).

The PAR framework was developed by grassroots Latin American intellectuals, Fals-Borda (1987) and Freire (2000, 2007), who established the idea of critical consciousness, the democratisation of knowledge production, anti-oppressive practice, and social justice. It also recognises Hall's (1975) articulation of the value of an approach that challenged the artificial borders between theory, research, and action. Hall's conceptualisation of PAR holds participant knowledge to be integral to validity, and democratic and participatory knowledge production as foundational to social change. He highlights commonalities that run through the many versions of PAR: (1) meaningful and consequential participation of marginalised communities; (2) the production of critical knowledge through participatory inquiry; and (3) the implementation of social change for and by communities themselves. The interaction of these elements provides the ideological foundation for a research process that empowers participants to transform their social reality by becoming critical participants in knowledge production, community development and social change.

Ladson-Billings (2000) asserts that PAR is against the seizure of epistemic space by academic researchers wherein the life and knowledge of vulnerable, often colonized communities have served as "data plantations" for research done ostensibly on their behalf. PAR goes against this idea, by establishing that the researched (participants) are researchers who hold knowledge and can analyze it (Koch & Kralik 2006; MacDonald 2012). It is "a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes" (Reason & Bradbury 2001:1). Since knowledge is gained through action, participants are co-decision makers in the research process. It is critical to mention that it is an empirical process not only for creating knowledge, but simultaneously, for education and mobilization for action (Selener 1997; Kemmis & McTaggart 2003).

In the 1980s a new generation of action research emerged, which sought the connection between critical emancipatory action research and PAR, developed in the context of social movements in the developing world (Kemmis & McTaggart 2003). Two important themes emerged from this movement: the development of theoretical arguments for action-focused approaches to action research, and the quest to link with broad social movements through PAR as an alternative philosophy of social research (Kemmis & McTaggart 2003). PAR's key features involve a spiral of self-reflective cycles of planning and change, acting and observing the process and consequences of change, reflecting on these processes and consequences leading to a repeat of the cycle (Kemmis & McTaggart 2003).

Since these stages overlap, the criterion for a successful PAR is not strictly following the steps by participants, "…but rather whether they have a strong and authentic sense of development and evolution in their *practices,* their *understandings* of their practices, and the *situations* in which they practice" (Kemmis & McTaggart 2003:277). This implies that PAR researchers are not the best of "rule-followers" (Brydon-Miller et al. 2003), since it is much more a methodology than a tightly defined method. The self-reflective practice is performed in collaboration with participants as co-researchers in the belief that by constituting practices in social interaction between people, changing practices become social interaction (Kemmis & McTaggart 2003). This makes PAR "a social process of collaborative learning realized by groups of people who join in changing practices through which they interact in a shared social world in which, for better or worse, we live with the consequences of one another's actions" (Kemmis & McTaggart 2003:277).

As summarized by Kemmis and McTaggart (2003), PAR is a social process, participatory, practical and collaborative, emancipating, critically reflexive, and aims to transform both theory and practice. Each of these principles is relevant to this research, namely, the pursuit of social change and the democratization of the knowledge process.

PAR as Political Practice: more than a methodology?
Further on the point raised in the above section, Kemmis and McTaggart (2003, 2005) argue that PAR is an alternative philosophy of social research that is often associated with social transformation in the Third World. It has roots in liberation theology (of Latin America)[138] and neo-Marxist approaches to community development. It also has liberal origins in human rights activism (especially in Asia)[139]. PAR distinguishes itself from conventional research because of its commitment to social, economic, and political development responsive to the needs and opinions of ordinary people. Despite its claim to value neutrality, conventional social research normally serves the ideological function of justifying the position and interests of the wealthy and powerful rather than the people whom PAR considers the owners of the research (McTaggart 1997; Fals Borda & Rahman 1991; Freire 1982; Greenwood & Levin 2006; McGuire 1987). This makes PAR more than just a methodology.

As Fals-Borda (2001:31) argued, it is also a philosophy of life which "converts those who engage in its processes to become thinking feeling persons." Reason and Bradbury (2006:10) assert that it is a 'political statement' and 'theory of knowledge' which, "affirms people's right and ability to have a

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[138] The Latin American liberation theology, 1950s and 1960s, is a synthesis of Christian theology and socio-economic analyses, based on far-left politics, particularly Marxism, that emphasises "social concern for the poor and political liberation for oppressed peoples" (see Cook 1998:203).
[139] See Kemmis et al. 2014.

say in decisions which affect them". It responds to calls for moral, caring and political issues and challenges the traditional separation between academia and activism (Tandon 1998).

PAR has gained some popularity in sociology because it responds to broader concerns with the detached, hierarchical and exploitative nature of many conventional research encounters which produce "few tangible benefits" for research subjects (Kesby et al. 2005; Cameron & Gibson 2005; Routledge 1996). In contrast, PAR "does not conduct research on a group, but works with them to achieve [the] change that they desire" (Kindon 2005:208). It brings new "voices into the academy" (Pain 2004:654) and increases the likelihood that research will be "appropriate, meaningful and relevant" to the participating communities (Maguire 1987; Kesby et al. 2005). It means that PAR does not start by gathering data, but asks how information is gathered and how the community, with the support of the researcher, uses the information in the research process (Selener 1997).

Evidently, PAR does not always reach these high goals. In their critique of participatory orthodoxy in international development, Cooke and Kothari (2001) remarked that participation often reinforces power inequities, and it is important to note that their criticisms were not restricted to poorly implemented, participatory projects but directed at the discourse of participation itself. Also, Isenberg et al. (2004:13) noted that it cannot be assumed that "power sharing and PAR" always serve the "greater social good". This means that researchers must tend towards the transparency of a complex reality of a PAR process in order to help new researchers learn about the challenges of PAR in real-life situations, and to open up the discussion on the quality and boundaries of PAR. For everyone who is interested in engaging with PAR methodology, these critiques have important implications, and they remind us (researcher and participants) that this methodology inhabits contested ground, and that adopting it does not place beyond moral reproach.

PAR Ideologies and Principles
As a framework, PAR is interdisciplinary (Selener 1997; MacDonald 2012), heterogeneous (Bergold & Stefan 2012; Kindon et al. 2010; McTaggart 1994), counter hegemonic (McIntyre 2008; Kindon et al. 2010) and highly contextualised in nature. As such, it does not have a single formula or fixed set of principles. It is cyclical[140] and generates new praxis (the combination of theory and practice) as stated by De Finney & Ball (2015). It is deeply critical of linear thinking and it considers causality as circular with multiple determinants rather than singular predictable antecedents (Fine et al. 2003). It allows participants to draw complex implications for praxis and apply these to social action. Thus, to develop praxis, participants must go through a number of iterations of the PAR cycle.

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[140] See figure 5

PAR Cycle: Making Praxis
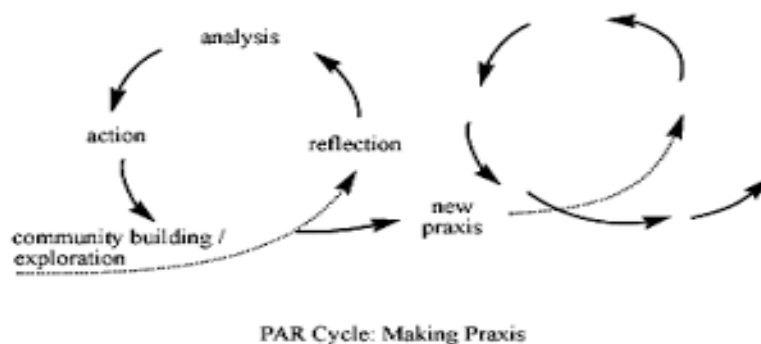
Figure 6: The PAR praxis making cycle[141]

This means that the PAR process subverts the role of the outside "expert" researcher by flattening the traditionally hierarchical researcher-researched relationship. In the PAR process, researchers and participants collaborate, pooling their different expertise and cultural knowledge in a generative process that results in socially meaningful analysis and engagement, action plans, and social action that reflects the needs and goals of community members. However, the PAR principles are a source of much debate within and outside the field, but researchers (Fals-Borda 1996; Hall 1975; Maguire 1987; Kemmis & McTaggart 2005) have written extensively about commonalities within the PAR paradigm.

As a collective process, PAR relies on horizontal distribution of power, grounded in the experiences and participation of a community. It supports local knowledge, working across borders of insiders and outsiders (Hall 1975; 1981). Smith et al. (1997) argue that its organic and contextualized nature creates potential multiple pathways and iterations that allows participants to be involved in all stages of the research process. Its use of qualitative methods such as ethnography, narrative interviews, focus groups, participant observation, community surveys, evaluation, textual analysis, videotapes, structured surveys, photojournalism, narrative storytelling, field notes, are reflective of participants' experiences, backgrounds and capacities. The methods acknowledge participants' cultural contexts, and so position them to articulate their theories on issues affecting their lives.

PAR - Data Collection Methods
This research adopted the three qualitative methods of semi-structured interview, focus group and participant observation for data collection. This is to "…transcend the limitations of each individual method so as to triangulate data generation and produce more effective ideas" (Streubert & Carpenter 1995). These methods were chosen to enable participants to explore their world and natural setting in order to make sense of, or to interpret phenomena from their perspectives (Denzin & Lincoln 2011; Aldridge 2015). Also, the intention was to allow the researcher to gather a detailed

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[141] De Finney & Ball 2015.

account of diverse perspectives, interests and actions of various actors involved in the research process without manipulation in their natural settings (Reeves et al. 2013).

Since the research was about taking action for social change (McNiff & Whitehead 2011), the data collection procedures chosen were contextually relevant and accessible to my research participants. This was to allow the researcher to approach the inherent complexity of social interaction and to do justice to the complexities that might arise while respecting the views of the research participants (Glesne and Peshkin 1992).

PAR: Cycles of Action and Reflection

Planning action
Given the nature of the Ogoni environment, which places participants in a vulnerable situation, and the fact that majority of the participants had experience with researchers[142] who applied conventional social sciences method that made participants believe research is done in a particular way, PAR was a new approach to them. Also, due to the fact that participants were from different kingdoms with somehow divergent views especially on sensitive issues such as youth participation in violence within Ogoni communities, my position as a neutral researcher created some amount of trust between participants and myself, and between participants themselves.

The research adopted the process of planning, evaluating and feeding the resulting data into an ongoing research process. The process started by assessing (in collaboration with the participants) the current state of affairs in Ogoni in order to determine the need changing the current situation. The implementation plan included deciding, in collaboration with the participants, on a particular topic (e.g. mobilisation and the ongoing struggle for justice) to evaluate and identify participants' contributions and expectations, and setting up an agenda for the discussion sessions and participatory evaluation and other resource requirements. This was required in order to give confidence to research participants who are vulnerable due to the tense environment brought about by the military presence and the incessant violent crackdown, and to enable us, both the researcher and participants, to achieve the desired result. Even though these were the initial goals for the sake of the mutual process regarding attainment of expected goals, I expected to have to redesign the research process due to the nature of the research environment.

Implementing the action plan
From the discussions so far, it is clear that a PAR process must be rigorously empirical and reflective. As an evolving approach to inquiry, the fundamental premise is that it embraces the

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[142] Revealed during my pilot study

concerns experienced by a group, community or organization (Stringer 1996). Ideally, participants should request to engage in a PAR project[143], but it is not the case with this research. I initiated the process by approaching (during the pilot study) the Ogonis who, from my study of the literature on the Niger Delta, shared similar problems such as the marginalization of minority ethnic groups in Nigeria with other minority groups in the country. Thus, the PAR process, which is collaborative in nature, becomes a vital tool in our joint struggle to bring about meaningful social change to the Ogoni situation. Obviously, the result of this research could be a template for other minority groups seeking justice.

Following Savin-Baden & Wimpenny's (2007) recommendations, the sessions were planned around: (1) getting to know each other (myself and participants); (2) exploring the PAR method; (3) and encouraging the development of collective decision-making, to create an atmosphere whereby openness could be expressed and trust expected. Kidd & Kral (2005) emphasised the importance of creating early opportunities between the participants in order to initiate dialogue and share preliminary understandings of the issues at hand. Although Kidd & Kral (2005) advised on roles within the inquiry and sharing of power (responsibility) for the research process, Rahman (1993) and McTaggart (1997) argue that most groups who engage in PAR are accustomed to traditional research hierarchies and as such may resist the sharing of power that is offered. However, the research adopts a stance, a particular kind of 'attitude'[144] whereby such sharing of power is possible. That is, "showing respect, genuineness and openness to the experience, listening and responding to requests by participants, negotiating points of difference and commonality and having a framework for action that can be broadly applied" (Savin-Baden & Wimpenny 2007)[145].

As Coghlan (2001:49) explained, this planned action involves "opportunistic planned intervention in real time situations and a study of those interventions as they occur. Ordinarily, it is just enough to do a post-training evaluation where the researcher and participants assess their contributions, but by feeding the evaluation data generated to facilitate the ongoing discussion" on the basis of participants' perspectives, it is expected that this approach improves the effectiveness of the ongoing discussion. In addition to this outcome, the PAR evaluation process increases the quantity as well as quality of the evaluation data generated. The idea here is for the process to make significant contribution as regards the Ogoni struggle for change.

Using Weick's (1988) concept of the shared meanings and emotions of enacted sense making, the research needed to identify my own biases and the assumptions of participants in relation to managing the desired change from the traditional rigid evaluation process to a participatory one. I

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[143] See Kidd & Kral 2005; Fals-Borda 1991
[144] See Kidd & Kral 2005:189
[145] See details in chapter 4

had to examine when and how shared meanings and emotion are more or less likely to be helpful, or adaptive. This is of great importance because of the relationship between participants and myself; though bearing in mind the bias that proximity can bring to learning (Kuwada 1990). Both in the data generation and analysis process, I am careful not to allow my judgment of what a good evaluation should be dominate, rather, I allowed the participants to make sense jointly out of the research intervention for the intended result.

Reflection and reflexivity

I had to engage in reflection after each cycle in order to evaluate the lived experiences of participants and learning from the resulting intervention (Watson 2002). As Moon (2004:6) explains "…a reasonable definition of reflection indicates that we reflect on what we already have learned". So, it was necessary to review what has been learned about the Ogoni movement during the process and how participants' collective action could resolve the issue faced by the Ogoni society. Besides this "reflection-on-action", the research process also incorporated reflection-in-action (Schon 1992; Weick 2002) and highlighted both personal reflection for me and group reflection for us.

My field journals[146] were critical for me to think about self from a subjective perspective (Cunliffe 2004). This practice, according to Anderson (2008), reflects the researcher recognising his effect on the outcomes of the research and taking account of this involvement. This is exhibited through reflexive notes inserted in my account[147]. Discussions on these are incorporated in my personal reflections. It includes introspective reflexivity about my role as a researcher in the intervention, methodological reflexivity about my closeness to the subject matter and epistemological reflexivity about the mediating influence of language in co-creating meaning and the questioning of assumptions (Anderson 2008).

How the outcomes are linked to the literature and the implications for the research and practice are discussed, concluding with my meta-learning expressed in personal reflections on the entire research activity. Based on the final stages of enacting the action research cycles (Coughlan & Brannick 2005), chapter 4 reflects on the insights I gleaned from the experience including the initial construction, description of the issue and what I have learned from the Ogoni situation. My reflection on the process includes how participants worked on conceptualising and problematizing the research process and what I have learned about planning, implementing the plan and evaluating it. I also reflect on any challenges to the premises or assumptions I began with, anything that challenged participants to ask different questions from those originally contemplated or to see the issue differently from their original understanding.

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[146] See appendix 4
[147] See chapter 4

Data Analysis

There are different types of qualitative data analysis techniques and approaches in the constructionist perspective: narrative analysis, conversation analysis, discourse analysis and thematic analysis (Hennink 2014). Although there are common themes that hold them together and any of these approaches could be used for this research, I preferred Thematic Analysis (TA) because of the importance of presenting the report in a way that allows the reader to distinguish between the data, the analytic framework and the interpretation by producing a convincing account of the data (Mays & Pope 1995).

TA deals with textual data generated from interviews, which are often transcribed verbatim[148] from audio recordings (Bernard & Ryan 1998, 2010). It requires more involvement and interpretation from the researcher, as it moves beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focuses on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas within the data (Bernard & Ryan 1998, 2010). Codes are then typically developed to represent the identified themes and applied or linked to raw data as summary markers for analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006). Generally speaking, reliability is of greater concern with thematic analysis because more interpretation goes into defining the data items[149] as well as applying the codes to chunks of text. Despite the reliability issue, I feel that a TA is still the most useful in capturing the complexities of meaning within a textual dataset.

The process of analysis

As explained above, TA aims to achieve an understanding of patterns of meanings from data on lived experiences (i.e. participants' descriptions of experiences related to the research question in interviews). While conducting the analysis, the researcher strives to understand meanings embedded in experiences and describe these meanings textually. Through the process, details and aspects of meaning are explored, requiring reading and reflective writing. Parts of the text need to be understood in terms of the whole and the whole in terms of its parts. However, the researcher also needs to move between being close to and distant from the data (Sundler et al. 2019).

Reflexivity

As already argued, the researcher needs to maintain a reflective attitude during the entire research process. In this context, it is important to show the connection between TA and PAR. It is understood that TA works with qualitative material and a generally constructionist epistemology, but when used in PAR, as in this research, the purpose is to generate results that can feed back into the next stage of the research process (e.g. between the pilot process and the main stage of the

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[148] See appendix 4 & 5
[149] See appendix 4 & 5

fieldwork; and between writing the thesis and a future return to Ogoni). Thus, reflexivity involves questioning the understanding of data and themes derived. That researcher must question the findings instead of taking them for granted, which is synonymous with PAR research process where analysis is an ongoing process (Baum et al. 2006; MacDonald 2012). Another way that reflexivity is maintained is by comparing the original data with the descriptive text of themes derived. Moreover, findings need to be illustrated with original data to demonstrate how the derived descriptions are grounded in the data rather than in the researcher's understanding (Sundler et al. 2019).

How Assumptions Are Challenged

First of all, the research ensures that participants express themselves uninterruptedly and freely. It encourages participants to identify with others (in the group discussions) whose experience are either at variance or indistinguishable from their own. More importantly, the PAR process creates the opportunity for participants to bear in mind that we (researchers and participants) are part of the problem that we are trying to solve and the problem is part of us. This enables us to know how to engage and deal with whatever ethical or political issue that may arise. This is particularly important for the researcher since it is his or her responsibility to harmonise the pre-understanding, insights and experience that participants bring to the research (Gummesson 2000).

This requires that the researcher attends to his or her own assumptions with self-aware reflection; make the intervention collaborative as a research-in-action, testing all assumptions and inferences and links practice with theory (Coghlan & Brannick 2005). The dialogical approach is helpful in this case, because the researcher engages in discussion with participants in order to challenge the research findings and seek alternative explanations, inconsistencies, problematic assumptions, biases and so on. This position is informed by my understanding of Eikland's (2006) conceptualization of action research. He urged action researchers to combine a theoretically oriented or directed dialogue with a practically oriented or directed, deliberative action research. Thus, the dialogical approach does not accord any superiority or higher status to the knowledge of the scientific researcher above the knowledge of the real-world practitioner. This involves dealing with participants' practical, day-to-day experience without undermining the other's position.

Research Ethics in PAR

Before my engagement with the pilot study and subsequent field work in Ogoni, I applied for and gained formal ethical approval from the Social Research Ethics Sub-Committee (SRESC[150] - see appendix 6 for approval letter) at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth (NUIM). Since the

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[150] https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/research/research-development-office/research-ethics (see appendix six for sample letter).

research context was Nigeria, I also studied and had knowledge of the data protection guideline of the 1999 amended Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (No. 37).[151] Based on these approved codes of practices, high ethical standards are maintained throughout the research process.

Ethical issues are present in all kinds of research involving subjects (Orb et al. 2000). However, even though PAR shares similar ethical issues such as, harms and benefits of research, the rights of participants to information, privacy and anonymity, and the responsibilities of the researcher to act with integrity[152], with traditional methodologies, it espouses a unique set of values and principles different from more traditional approaches. Drawing from the aims of this research, the PAR ethical issues that this research deals with are: (1) group identity; (2) participants' vulnerable and marginalized positions; (3) the complexity of power dynamics and relations in research process; (4) resources available and existing competencies; (5) PAR, Emergent, Flexible and Iterative Process; and (6) PAR- Process for Social Action.

Group Identity
Following the arguments established above, knowledge building for enhancing of collective identity for collective social change (Healy 2001) is achieved through capturing and detailing participants' collective identity, problems, strengths, and opportunities. This is for the sake of building social cohesion and group capacity. However, the research is careful not to allow this approach to achieving unity to lead to the dangers of essentialism and identity politics[153], whereby an individual or a group (particular kingdom) is ascribed a fixed identity (Dick 2011). In the context of essentialism and identity politics, marginalization occurs especially for members whose experiences do not reflect those of the wider group. As Healy (2001) observed, the quest toward collective identity and unity can potentially impose on or exclude individuals or members disempowering their ability to self-determine and self-identify.

In order to mitigate this ethical risk, the research adopted Dick's (2011:32) recommendation, that the researcher adopt an anti-essentialist approach. This means that identities are contingent, contextually situated, and are always in construction, and that identities "are the product of both assignment and choice; they are something for which affirmation is sought, yet they are also the subject of deconstruction, negotiation, challenge, resistance, and revision". In this case, the PAR democratic process to knowledge building becomes an inevitable tool, because it creates an environment that allows participants to build collective identity and voice within the group. This encourages individual differences among group members.

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[151] https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Nigeria_1999.pdf. This is further described in the and the new Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, 2011, No.14.- see: https://www.cbn.gov.ng/FOI/Freedom%20Of%20Information%20Act.pdf
[152] See Kindon et al. 2010.
[153] As in participants' gender, kingdom and political affiliation- see chapter 1.

Participants' Vulnerable and Marginalized Positions

As observed throughout the preceding sections, the PAR approach gives voice to vulnerable and marginalized people and it creates space for those voices to be heard. It creates the opportunity for those directly affected by social inequalities and injustices to construct their own stories and identities to avoid "a portrayal of the participants as they are constructed in dominant ideology" (Coy 2006:428). There is no doubt that the process facilitates the deconstruction of social stigmas attached to groups.

However, Joanou (2009) argues that it can paradoxically reify the same negative perceptions. He talks about the risk of re-stigmatization, which occurs when the narrative of negative stereotypes, perceptions, and assumptions about a particular person or group is supported and continues to persist within new contexts. The research considered the risk of re-stigmatization, especially about the negative perceptions and stereotypes against Ogoni youth from different communities (the idea of cultism among the youth, see chapter 4), where even if a youth resigns from being a member of a cultist group, they are seen as a problem to the society; sometimes an entire community is singled out as violent or harbouring criminals. This highlights a situation where participants themselves can re-stigmatize members of other communities.

Considering the ethical principle of "do no harm" (Kindon et al. 2010), the research confronted this ethical dilemma by considering whether the risks of identifying the community as disadvantaged outweighed the possible positive outcomes experienced by the participants and the wider community. The research interrogated this dilemma at subsequent interviews[154], where participants were directed to consider dominant representations within their communities and then reflect on their own stories in this regard. Participants were challenged to think critically about their narrative representations and choices of words that have the potential to reinforce negative stereotypes or put blame for violence and crimes on individuals or communities. These narrative representations by participants were paired with critical discussions to both acknowledge external structures and discourses that shape participants' perspectives and opportunities to put forward a coherent alternative vision (Kwan & Walsh 2018).

The Complexity of Power Dynamics and Relations in Research Process

In the PAR process, participants share equal responsibilities, decision-making power, and ownership of the research. This egalitarian stance is a laudable aspect of PAR, but as Connolly (2006) remarks, it is challenging and complex in practice. Without careful considerations of various issues such as power dynamics and relations, resources available, and existing competencies at

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[154] See chapter 4

play, there is the potential of tokenistic partnerships and "false equalitarianism" (Nygreen 2009) that can emerge and cause harm to individuals and communities.

Joanou (2009) defined power dynamics and relations as how power works in a specific context, such as who has and who does not have, and the ability to influence others, to negotiate, effect change, and to make decisions. The research addressed this reality in the research field where the complexity of power relations between men, women and young participants could not be ignored. This is especially in focus group sessions where participants represent different kingdoms. The research was careful in handling the perceived tension, especially between the youth and elders and between men and women when addressing sensitive issues, for example, women issues or as some elderly participants thought they had more accurate narratives than the younger participants.

Resources available and existing competencies
The research was sensitive to the inequalities within the society under investigation: their socio-economic status, education levels, gender, financial capacity, age, ability and different access to resources and skills. These fundamental inequities placed unfair expectations and burdens on the research, which could lead to some potentially exploitive relationships since the unequal structure distorted the intent of shared responsibility.

Morgan et al. (2014) caution that researchers must keep in mind that while participatory research promotes equal relationships, it does not necessarily emphasize the equal distribution of power, thus, discussions about the challenges towards achieving equal relationships are necessary to mitigate the potential harm of exploitative relationships or tokenistic partnerships. The shift in terminology is significant in the sense that it implicates power dynamics at play, which is not only between researchers and participants but also among the participants. Healy (2001) argues that a power-neutral approach may not be ideal. For example, participants may consider some operations of power as useful for maintaining collective cohesion and direction.

Rather than assuming power-neutral positions, the research acknowledged both positive and negative operations of power to address the negative effects and facilitate the positive effects. Healy (2001:97) warns that a power averse or power-neutral approach does not make inherent power differences disappear, rather "such recognition is sent underground". Nugus et al. (2012:1951) affirmed Healy's position by talking about re-conceptualization of power, which is that "participatory research needs a concept of politics and power beyond the fixed oppositional categories of empowerment and disempowerment. Power is shifting, not fixed, and a source of both opposition and opportunity. So, power relationships, such as those exposed by research, need constant critical reflection."

PAR- Process for Social Action

As an action-oriented methodology, the research mobilizes participants to take social action based on the knowledge built throughout the research process (Kindon et al. 2010). According to Dawson and Sinwell (2012:178) those who engage in that process "are social movement researchers who employ research techniques aimed at exposing social inequalities and who seek to actively promote progressive social change." Thus, a critical reflection is needed here, because a research aimed at social action and change could raise various ethical issues and dilemmas such as culturally inappropriate expressions of social action for example, to advice on waving of palm branches as explained in chapter 1. Stuart (1998) notes that in PAR projects, which often target social action issues, the day-to-day life of the participants faces significant risk and discomfort. In fact, the risk of physical, psychological, social and economic harm is part of daily life of every marginalized group. Within the PAR paradigm, therefore, the obligation to mitigate the effects of harm for such groups is discharged by creating change in participants' daily lives.

Conclusion

This chapter has given a justification of the chosen methodology and methods. Considering the earlier established research aims and questions, it has demonstrated how my use of PAR framework is a necessary choice. The goal is to set up a foundation for the methodology chapter, which is the hub of the thesis, because it integrates the conceptual and practical issues that constitute the theory-practice focus of this research. Also, the chapter demonstrated how the PAR methodology is a radical alternative to knowledge development as opposed to conventional research approach argued above: a collective, self-reflective inquiry for the purpose of improving or changing the situation of oppressed or marginalized people (Maguire 1987). It showed how the PAR process creates the environment for discussing, understanding and evaluating the Ogoni phenomenon from the perspectives of participants.

Although the chapter acknowledged that there are challenges as regards conducting a PAR study, it also argued that it is a valuable methodology for working with an oppressed or marginalized group or community. It has led the reader through the research paradigm - the social constructionist epistemology which made PAR approach my choice - understanding PAR in terms of its history and principles. It detailed how the PAR cycles are applied in the research through the use of the research methods (particularly focus groups); the use of thematic analysis to facilitate the interpretation of the data. It also discussed the ethical issues related to PAR and the strengths, challenges, and reflexivity as a key component of the entire PAR process.

Chapter 4

Methodology, Reflection on Field Experience and Data

Analysis Process and Reflection

Introduction

In chapter three, I explained the reason for adopting the PAR methodology and what it is. The goal of this chapter is to discuss how it works in practice. Hence, the chapter is divided into three main sections comprising: **(1)** *How data was generated through the PAR process* - this gives a detailed structure of the empirical study of the research. It provides a comprehensive description of data collection methods. **(2)** *Reflection on my field experience* - this reflects on the methodology, which is about understanding the significance and complexities of my activities on the field. It reveals my engagement with the PAR spiral process of action (observation and reflection) to achieve greater understanding of the Ogoni-participants' interpretation of their social reality. A common-sense view of action which according to McNiff (2002:7) helps us to "…review our current practice, identify an aspect we want to improve, imagine a way forward, try it out, and take stock of what happens". It should be noted, therefore, that this chapter builds the foundation that enable our understanding of the research analysis and findings. **(3)** *Data analysis process and reflection* - this section presents and analyzes the data obtained in the course of my field work in the most simple and comprehensive manner for the readers to understand. Analyzing the data and presenting the themes/findings generated enables readers to evaluate how the data obtained meets the objectives of the study as set out in chapter one. The third section lays foundation that allow readers follow up what will be main discussion in chapter five.

Each section is divided into relevant subsections.

Section 1: Methodology - How Data was Generated
Geographical Context

The research was carried out in a harsh geographical region (environmental disaster caused by the oil activities - see sample figure 7). It should be noted that I have limited photo examples attached in this research work in order not to expose my research participants to any risk.

Figure 7: Photo showing one of the hazardous levels of pollution in Ogoniland (photo by Bashiru Abdullahi-The New Humanitarian/IRIN- Integrated Regional Information Networks- thenewhumanitarian.org).

The Ogoni society comprises several compact villages[155], settlements, hidden along back roads mostly sharing boundaries with polluted creeks as seen in the picture above. Each of these villages has an approximate number of 2,000 to 5,000 people. Ogoniland is 23.47km (14.55 miles) away from Port Harcourt, and is located along the highway between Port Harcourt and Akwa Ibom State. It borders the Atlantic Ocean, which is the multinational companies' route for transporting the oil out of the country. Access to social services or basic social amenities (education, health and housing) is a major problem for the population. The society has more young people (aged 1-18) and middle aged (20-40) than elderly people. An Ogoni child must leave their environment for the city before they are able to access quality education. It is interesting, however, how almost every Ogoni citizen (both young and old) was able to articulate their story of oppression.

This description and the socio-economic situation[156] of Ogoni leaves no doubt that they are a marginalized group. There are advantages and risks associated with research in such contexts. As Hooks (2000:207) opined, it "offers to one the possibility of radical perspective from which to see and create, to imagine alternatives, new worlds", and on the other hand, it can lead to further marginalization through the 'other' (Said 2017). That is, by promoting separation between members within or from different communities; or that the narrative can become part of a renewal of colonizing power (Allan 1999:113). Observing from our (researcher and participants) relationship during the research process, it was beneficial in the sense that it offered participants the opportunity to think in relation to how they can position their struggle to subvert the government dominated oppressive structures in Ogoni.

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[155] Also referred to in this research as communities.
[156] See chapter 1.

Experience in Ogoniland

The researcher

According to Coffey (1999), the researcher must be positively present throughout the research, and they must identify themselves as part of the world they know (Ballard 1995). As such, Ballard advised researchers to write stories about themselves as part of their reports so they become available for public scrutiny. This is particularly important for me as this research required working with vulnerable people in a difficult environment.

Before I started this PhD research, my studies for the priesthood and subsequent engagement with pastoral activities exposed me to work with people from different cultural backgrounds. Though subject to argument, the priestly vocation, which is basically theology and not sociology, is not so much engaged with the critique of any given society as found with sociology as an academic discipline. For example, my seven months research with the indigenous Ogonis has had more impact on me than I have ever had in the last 12 years working with indigenous people in pastoral context. I feel that the impact on the Ogoni participants and myself is not just for academic purposes, but has created an awareness that allowed us to ask questions about issues that affect the Ogonis and their society. Thus, stepping into the world of PAR was an intentional initiative to better understand key challenges the Ogoni indigenous people faced in their daily lives.

As I have already established, the Ogoni questions are about livelihood, economic poverty, environmental degradation and self-determination. Based on the theoretical foundation of PAR, I felt this is the best way to conduct this research ethically and responsibly, with a real concern for people as opposed to extracting and analysing data for the sole purpose of advancing my knowledge and intellectual agenda and vocation. As I look back, I have realised how the process has improved my understanding in order to assess the complex Ogoni social issues by engaging the people.

As I reflect on the research process, I found myself grappling with two unsettling puzzles. The first concerns the relationship between science and society - the relationship between the inquiry process and our everyday social life, questions about "theories" and how they relate to the important issues of our time and society. Also, questions about "methods" such as interviews, focus groups and observation, for doing research especially with human subjects - that is, about real conversations between people gathering evidence and reflecting critically on matters that count. Secondly, what I still struggle with as I report on my experience in the field concerns the evolution of PAR and the different perspectives that have developed over so many years: the breadth and wealth of PAR experience with its contribution to addressing issues ranging from education, health, community

life, the workplace, environmental degradation, gender relations and public engagement[157]. The question arose as to how to tap the vast potential of PAR within the scope of my research and learn from practitioners. This has led me to recognise the complexities of each discipline, initiative and field of intervention especially in different settings.

From my experience in the field, I agree that PAR, as an approach to the inquiry process, promotes pluralism and creativity in the art of discovering the world[158] and making it better at the same time. It accommodates a broad spectrum of theoretical orientations and methods. However, according to Chevalier and Buckles (2013) "…the respectful practice of pluralism falls far short of its own targets. …being open minded will not overcome the divides and gaps separating theories, methods and styles of PAR that coexist, tolerate each other and, in the best of cases, intermingle according to personal preferences". As is often the case with PAR practitioners, there is a need to borrow and adapt tools and concepts from a variety of sources and perspectives. This is to develop a collective sense of direction and a critical appreciation of what PAR variants have to offer and where they need to stretch themselves. This is done by promoting cross-fertilisation among the main stances adopted in the field as one understands them.

To be more specific, the rational pragmatics of problem solving; the focus on awareness building and transformative learning; and the critical emancipatory struggle for greater social justice[159] approaches of PAR have influenced my thinking with regards to how I can connect theory, methods and real-life issues. Looking back over the last three years since I started this PhD programme, I have realised how difficult the circumstances of my work had been, both socially, economically, my priestly life and thematically. That is, having to reconcile my identity as a priest with these social realities.

Gaining Access to the Research Field and commencing Fieldwork
Due to the security situation reported earlier, I wondered about gaining access, but since my choice for the research site was intentional and given that the Ogoni social reality speaks to my experience as a member of a minority ethnic group and with the possibility of generating knowledge for critical public policies (Fine & Weis 1996), I eventually navigated through.

Through a priest in Port Harcourt whom I encountered via Facebook, I got in touch with the parish priest of Bomu[160], a member of my religious order who provided accommodation for me in the parish. I sought accommodation at the parish house, given my limited budget and because of security reasons - I could easily be mistaken for an oil worker and kidnapped if I stayed in a hotel or

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[157] See Selener 1997; MacDonald 2012.
[158] See Brydon-Miller et al. 2003; Bergold & Stefan 2012; MacDonald 2012; Baum et al. 2006.
[159] See Chevalier & Buckles 2013; Selener 1997.
[160] One of the communities in Gokana.

elsewhere. I received a warm welcome from the parish priest who discussed the nature of the Ogoni environment with me, and guided me on how to build relationship with the locals. He was quick to say to me "never trust what they (Ogoni people) tell you, unless you hear from the others on the same issue". This was a little bombshell, as it increased my anxiety. Subsequently, I asked him what he meant by that and his reply was that they do not trust anyone unless they are sure about one's identity. I was involved in the parish pastoral work informally, but kept my boundaries as a researcher.

On the first day in Rivers State and on my way to Ogoniland from Port Harcourt, I was greeted by the air choking-smell caused by the flames from gas flare around the petrochemical companies (Akpajo junction- Eleme kingdom) at the outskirts of Port Harcourt city. Apart from the polluted creeks around the villages that I saw while entering Ogoniland, I watched in awe how the carbon monoxide from the gas flaring had destroyed the roofs (zinc sheets)[161] on people's houses. The presence of armed military men with sandbag barricades at the entrance of the community made me felt as if I was entering a war zone. I never understood this at first, until it became clearer to me during the interviews that it was the government's repressive tactics. Indisputably, one can easily be mistaken for a spy by the military. As I arrived in Bomu, it did not take me two hours to realise that not only that the entire population is subjected to taking into their lungs the black substance emitted constantly, but it is also found in the water that the people drink[162].

Apart from what I read from books, I had no encounter with anyone who had done research in Ogoni before. Everything I knew about the Ogoni people was from the books I read. So I wondered about the world I was stepping into; the possibility of a clash over cultural values and attitudes; the crisis environment; the local Ogoni language; the people I was going to meet or how I will spend my time there; about the difficulties of overcoming my "innocence" as an inexperienced fieldworker. I thought about the boundaries that already existed between my role as a Catholic priest and as a researcher among the vulnerable people.

Most importantly, I was worried about the Nigerian regional politics of the North versus the South, which, in most cases, is centred on the issues of social, economic and political inequalities - "ethnic hegemonism"[163] (Osha 2006). Though subject to different interpretations, there is an inherent supremacist idea in each of the three dominant ethnic groups, including regional antagonism, which has turned the other ethnic minority groups into mere political pawns. As captured in chapter 1, this is amplified by lack of education, not formal education but that indigenes of these groups have

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[161] This is the reason why most houses in Ogoni are roofed with asbestos sheets, which also is risky to human health.
[162] See UNEP report 2011.
[163] Ethnic hegemonism - an expression used to classify the northern dominance over federal government structures. Specifically, it points to the dominance of the Hausa-Fulani from the North-East/West and the Yoruba-South-West in the political and economic life of the country. This is explained in chapter one.

refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of other groups in the country and that has caused the ethno-religious divisions.[164]

Since I had never been to Ogoniland or Port Harcourt prior to my research, I established contacts with people basically through Facebook. I was lucky to create an online relationship with a member of the youth wing of MOSOP, who agreed to be my gatekeeper. At my request, he issued me a formal letter which I used to obtain ethical approval for my entry into Ogoniland for this research project. We had a period of negotiation which went on for three months before I arrived for the pilot. We met in Port Harcourt a day after I arrived, because I drove straight to Bomu. It was rainy season and pouring rain as I drove to Port Harcourt to meet him. It was difficult to locate the address since it was my first time to drive through the city and under heavy rainfall. Eventually, we met in an eatery where I took time and explained about my research and asked how he wished we could carry out the plan. To deal with any preconceived idea he may have had, I was clear about the nonprofit nature of my research. He pledged his support and promised to meet with me in Ogoni the next day so we could draw-up a timetable for the research. Surprisingly, he never showed up and refused to answer my phone calls or reply to my text messages.

I informed my host priest about the issue and he immediately asked one of his parishioners to assist me. I engaged the young man and discovered he was an ex-seminarian[165] and was willing to assist, when I requested if he could be my gatekeeper. Immediately, I had a meeting with him and explained about my research. Though my anxiety was calmed by the new development, I worried and wondered about any repercussions or sabotaging intentions that might follow due to the strange reaction from my initial contact. In my fear, I kept sending messages to him, which was mainly a strategy to keep him thinking that I was frustrated. I never wanted him to know I got someone else who could assist.

My interpretation of his attitude was that he expected a benefit which was not guaranteed at our initial meeting. Another possible explanation that came from my new gatekeeper was that he expected me to pay him money in order to fabricate data for me in Port Harcourt, which, according to him, is a common reality. The assumption here is that he must have been involved in such deals with some NGOs and researchers and expected the same from me. The following extract from my research journal illustrates my frustration after the experience:

> My enthusiasm fell completely flat after the experience. I can't get over this when, in fact, he sounded like looking forward to be involved in my research. He constantly told me how my research topic has not been explored in the Ogoni context and how he would assist me. I suspected and wondered why his tone

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[164] It is important to distinguish between the Islam practiced amongst the Yorubas in the South-West and that seen in the North-East/West. The former is moderate and peaceful and families with both Christians and Muslims coexist with no troubles; while the latter is totally the opposite.
[165] Trained for priesthood but not ordained

became aggressive after I explained to him the nature of my research- non-benefit. I am pleased with my new gatekeeper but I really don't feel safe and connected. I hope he doesn't come after me… (Reflective journal 08/07/17).

Indeed, it was a difficult experience for me and I worried about any impending consequences. Nevertheless, it helped strengthen my intuition and prepared me for eventualities. My fieldwork experience extended through five months (2nd April to 25th August 2018), and since my initial background was philosophy and theology, it seemed like a daunting experience. This was evident in the reflection noted in my research journal after my first interview:

> I felt strange in my role as a moderator during the interview. I have to say that I was nervous all through the session. I really wonder how they (participants) felt about the whole thing. With the guidelines surrounding the interview session, I felt it wasn't like the normal conversation that goes on between people. I'm concern [concerned] about my approach and the way I shared personal examples and opinions. I restate and clarify issues and I worry about my influence. It looked like I supported some other peoples' idea against the other; hope it's Ok. Having my own opinion and experiences and engaging with the discussion was very difficult… (Reflective journal 30/04/18).

I engaged in conversations and asked direct questions which I assumed to be crucial, but my gatekeeper, later made me realized how insensitive and intrusive I had been. One of the common examples is that the Ogoni people do not talk about their chiefs, especially when in a group with non-Ogonis. Also, I was not conscious of the political differences - where a kingdom is chastised because their members participate in state politics - and social status[166] of members from the different communities in Ogoniland. My initial impression was that there was one Ogoni, but participants were very strong in emphasizing their own kingdom. It was obvious that participants had divergent views on the current position of MOSOP as the voice of Ogoni. My initial reaction to this was noted in my journal:

> … how can I intervene at a meaningful level when such arguments come up? It is clear to me now that there are differences between these communities. What are really the issues? Do I need to be proactive or just observe at the sidelines? I think it is better to steer the discussions with much open-ended questions and allow them (participants) express themselves, as they understand the situation from their point of view (Reflective journal 26/06/17).

This experience prompted me to effect a major change in my research strategy after my pilot study; the expansion of my research location to cover the six kingdoms although research occurred in five kingdoms. I was convinced about the importance of allowing va ariety of ideas, which confirmed the importance of methodological triangulation (Sarantakos 2013).

Access to Gatekeeper and Participants
My new gatekeeper was an excellent and intelligent Ogoni man in his mid-40s. He had a diploma in Mass Communication and Journalism, with a good command of English language and the three Ogoni dialects. He was not just a gatekeeper but served as my interpreter, especially during the pilot period, when we conducted interviews in the local language. He was of great assistance throughout

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[166] Educational qualification and respect for elders, especially in focus group sessions with youth and middle age/elders.

the research period, because he picked up every side utterance in local dialects and also explained to me some nonverbal actions. He had no prior experience of being a gatekeeper, but never hesitated to learn about my research strategy and his job as a gatekeeper.

 It was surprising to me that he never asked what he might benefit from participating in the research. Notwithstanding, I took care of his food bills and topped up his mobile phone with airtime, since he did all the negotiating with potential participants. Access to participants was not an issue for him because he was a local and had some very good interpersonal skills that made him negotiate quite easily. It was through his committed efforts that I was able to access more participants than initially anticipated. Reflecting on his capacity and the way he went about connecting with potential participants, I made this entry in my journal:

> ….. my initial experience was quite disappointing but I think it's nothing to be sad about again. I'm amazed with the unreserved approach of this young man [gatekeeper]. His friendly approach and easy access to participants is something I can't understand. He has completely changed the initial troubling situation and I can't believe how he's able to navigate through all these people [participants]. He has given in all he has and I've no doubt that his involvement is genuine. I hope he carries me to the end (Reflective journal 01/05/19).

My relationship with him and the opportunity he created for us to approach potential participants and enter their space was professional and unimaginable. His interest in the research objectives, which he explained so well to potential participants made me realized the importance of a gatekeeper in the research field. I can only imagine how impossible it would have been for me if I had not found him.

For easy access and security of participants, my gatekeeper (who knew the environment better) negotiated with participants concerning interview venues. Over time, we were able to build trust with participants resulting in gaining access to their lived stories. But I must say that my experience with the Ogoni women, like in any other African culture, was not as smooth as it was with the men. I tried to speak to them as an outsider, without background knowledge of the context, and in this way, I was able to get some of them to speak to me. This was not easy, as it was clear that they had issues that they never wanted to share. I assumed it was the usual unassertive nature of the African women, who preferred not to say anything about their situation to someone from outside their family or culture.

However, the Catholic women were much better in terms of self-expression than women from other Christian denominations. This is due to the Catholic Women's Organization (CWO) structure in the Catholic Church. One of its major current principles is to resist the culture of social passivity imposed on them by the society. Most of them are outspoken and engage in social works (e.g. advocacy, activism, lobbying etc.), that makes them establish their position in our society. I am not sure about the approaches in the other Christian denominations, but access was a bit difficult with

women who were non-Catholics. Even those who accepted and engaged said little. It could be that their approach is still firmly rooted in the African cultural values, which allow women limited access to men. It was the same with the Catholic Church, but its current openness and engagement with social science disciplines[167] has opened up new ways of dealing with such social norms. Even though a student apprentice (Agar 1980) with limited experience as a researcher, my pastoral experience of working with women aided my approach. The following extract from my journal reflect my thoughts:

> I'm glad to be in the position that I have found myself. I think the positive reaction I have seen so far is coming from my position as a priest. I think these people [participants] feel comfortable with me because they see they can trust me. It could be that my engagement in the parish pastoral work has given them confidence in me. But there is something very interesting here. The attitude of the Catholic women is totally different from women in the other Churches. They appear to be hiding something from me, but I hope our interaction will eventually reveal what that is… I do not think it is right to expect similar behaviour from them [women participants from other churches] (Reflective journal 17/04/18).

The reality, in most cases, is that women who have been culturally suppressed have taken up the responsibility to fight against what is affecting their livelihoods. As it stands, everybody, from the women to the youth, to the men to the chiefs, the community leaders are discussing issues related to women, which was not part of our culture. So, this is for me a positive sign of change in relation to women's participation in the social life of our African society.

Data Generation Process

Ogoni Contextualisation

My motivation for undertaking this research was to facilitate the marginalized or oppressed Ogoni people to examine the socio-economic and political inequalities, and to identify their ways of working and organising the Ogoni social struggle that seeks justice for the Ogoni society in a nonviolent way.

I arrived in the field with my car, which was necessary from the point of view of my privacy and for easy access to participants. From the pilot experience I recall above, it would not have been easy to exit the field when such an incident occurred. I drove for thirty minutes or an hour some days to reach the communities at which interviews or focus group sessions took place. Since it was rainy season, the clouds rapidly descended almost on a daily basis in the afternoon causing convectional

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[167] The Catholic Church's initial position was that everything started and ended with theology. Its dogmatic nature saw everything as an act of faith and there was no room for a dissenting view. However, the Church took a different dimension after the Second Vatican Council. At the Council, the Church came up with four apostolic constitutions: *Sacrosanctum Concilium*- constitution on the sacred liturgy; *Lumen Gentium*- dogmatic constitution on the church; *Dei Verbum*- dogmatic constitution on divine revelation; *Gaudium et Spes*- pastoral constitution on the church in the modern world. The fourth, which is *Gaudium et Spes*, was a kind of revolution by the church on itself. Moving with the 'signs of the time' was the slogan adopted and it meant that the church must consciously react to the modern development in its pastoral outreach. What was almost a taboo for the church is now accepted as possible ways of meeting up with the demands of the modern society. Before this time, it was impossible for me to say to anyone that I am doing a research in social movement. Hence, the mentality to which we approach our missionary work with people is different and open to the numerous social challenges.

rainfall. I experienced five days of continuous rainfall, which is unusual in my part of the country. The rural communities have limited facilities and resources; very few primary schools with dilapidated buildings mostly, churches, village markets with more women selling vegetables and seafood such as crabs, and small grocery and provision shops mostly owned by non-Ogonis (e.g. the Igbos who are traders and found in almost every community in the country). Each community had a "town hall" centre where the chiefs held meetings with members, but there was limited or no economic activity apart from the subsistence farming activities.

The process of data collection developed organically through my relationship with the people/participants: typically, through individual interviews, focus group meetings and observing the people in their homes and communities as they went about their many responsibilities; taking field notes and detailing both men, women and the young, their lives, their family and their work; and casual or informal conversations with them while in the field. Some welcomed me into their homes and groups, and I developed personal and professional relationships with them. My gatekeeper facilitated the data collection by preparing a list of key potential participants and contacted them through the telephone for the semi-structured and focus group sessions.

Almost all interviews were conducted in English except three that were in *Pidgin*. This was to allow for flexibility so that participants might express themselves well. It is important to state, however, that while the majority of Ogoni population speaks English (in some cases *Pidgin*); some of the youth and women who participated in my research had just primary education. There were no pre-set questions administered. I animated the discussions having in mind the PAR cycle process, which allow participants to identify, reflect and assess their worldviews and the necessary action that will create the path to change. The assessment was accompanied by follow-up interviews with the aim of coming to a fuller understanding of the factors surrounding the risks associated with Ogoni activism.

I developed a rapport with participants who clearly understood why, and how, I was undertaking this research. Being an Ogoni, my gatekeeper acted as a cultural guide and became part of my research; thus, he was more than a gatekeeper. In our lengthy discussions, following our time with the participants in their homes and groups, we explored how the structures imposed by government in form of internal oppression, marginalized the Ogoni. It helped me identify how Ogoni challenge this in the everydayness of their lives, and in so doing, he helped me understand Ogoni people's movement.

Evidently, Ogoni society has experienced the most virulent campaign of repression including extrajudicial killings sanctioned by the government. Thus, participants in this research argued that Nigeria - Ogonis' reference to Nigeria means the central government, dominated by the North - with

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the undertone of the regional politics, is hindering Ogoni's survival and development in the midst of enormous resources. Hence, their choice is not to surrender to Nigeria's aggression, but to continue to fight for justice in a nonviolent way using Ken Saro-Wiwa's ethical template.

As one of the tools for data collection, I carried out observations in some communities in Nyo-Khana, Ken-Khana, Eleme and Tai kingdoms. I planned to have the observation at the end of the interviews in order to allow me to examine some of the emerging issues during the interview process. Unfortunately, the rising tension between the Bomu community in Gokana kingdom where I stayed for the research period and their neighbouring community - Lewe, also in Gokana - completely changed my initial plan, which made me exit the field for two weeks before I returned. Through my gatekeeper who is from the Bomu community, I had to renegotiate my accommodation. I stayed in another community, Yeghe (Gokana kingdom), for four weeks for observation.

Throughout the process, I kept asking myself what would have changed if I was an Ogoni insider, and also tried to think of how the research would have been carried out if it were to be in my own Tiv community, where I would have been an insider as well as an outsider. I consider this as critical questions as they provide the lens through which I discuss my lived experience in this research with which I share similarity and differences.

The research process and data collection was completed within six months and I exited the research field. I returned after 10 months to the field with the findings, which were presented to a cross section of participants in separate review discussion groups[168]. It is important to note that I could not enter the field due to the warning I received from an official member of MOSOP concerning sporadic shootings by the military in search of some youth alleged to have killed a military officer in Ogoni at the time. Qualitative analysis of the findings proceeded more slowly due to the situation. However, generated themes were shared in hard copies and discussed; participants re-examined and interpreted the findings and made recommendations. For example, after some discussion on the theme "political and economic marginalization" one middle aged participant strongly argued that the youth are doubly marginalized too. He spoke about empowerment (engagement through education and vocational skills) of the youth and women who, according to him, suffer more marginalization.

Relying on the arguments put forward by participants, it is right to conclude that the Ogoni society lives in the shadow of internal oppression, enduring social, economic, ethnic and political discrimination in the everydayness of their lives. The PAR process helped the Ogoni participants to see themselves not as helpless victims but as people ready to challenge the force that oppresses

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[168] See appendix 10

them. Through the PAR process, I was able to establish collaborative, equal (power) relationships in the field and the co-production of knowledge.

Pilot Experience

One of the striking experiences was when I got trapped during my pilot study due to a violent incident that occurred. It was a violent encounter between the two rival cult groups (Deebam and Deewell). The following extract from my research journal explains about the incidence:

> We were at morning Mass when I heard the sound of gunshots. It went silent until after Mass and then we were deafened by the unrestricted sounds of guns. It became clear that there was a serious problem in the community, as people trooped into the parish compound to seek refuge. Those who came into the compound told us the paramount chief of the community was kidnapped by the Deebam cultist group who accused him of supporting their rival group- Deewell. For protecting and defending the atrocities unleashed on the community by members of the Deewell group. We heard that the shooting was to scare away their rival group, but two people were killed by strayed bullets. I called off an interview scheduled to take place in Port Harcourt since it was impossible for anyone to step out. All routes leading to [into] and out of the community [were] blocked by both groups. It was a total shutdown of the community, as we were locked-up. …on the third day and as there was no end in sight to the shooting, the parish priest called the army officer and pleaded with him to come and take us out of the community. He obliged and we were taken out in an armoured car. I exited the field on the same day (Reflective journal 17/08/17).

This shows how the research journey was filled with episodes of fear and frustration. One of the main frustrations was waiting for participants for lengthy periods of time; or our being stuck in traffic on our way for interview; or cancellation of interviews by participants at the last minute. It was a bit of a nightmare driving into Port Harcourt almost every hour of the day due to breakdown of oil tanker trucks that blocked the roads, sometimes, we had to make a U-turn back to Ogoni as it was impossible to drive on. In such circumstances, we called and informed the participants and followed-up to reschedule the interview sessions if necessary.

I did defend my going back to the research field after this experience but constantly wondered about the potential consequences. I was however, encouraged by Dwyer and Mohammad's (1982: xxii) fundamental principles that, it is better to "confront rather than disguise the vulnerability of the self and its society in the encounter with the other".

From this initial experience, I was conscious of the type of questions that I was asking, and was conscious of the non-verbal cues in order to identify whatever that was comfortable for participants. Since transcripts do not note the context of the interview or replace an actual event (Miller & Glassner 2011), I was conscious of the locations and imagined issues of significance surrounding the location, body language, and the mood of participants. Though it was always exhausting travelling for interviews, the thrill of understanding someone else's situation, stepping into their world and of seeing things through their eyes was great. Using Glesne and Peshkin's (1992) description, the experience provided me with pictures of the unseen, expanded my understanding,

offered penetrating insights and upset any of my well-entrenched ignorance. Here is my reaction to this:

> … I feel like I'm seeing an image of myself in these people [participants]. I can't believe their way of life is somehow similar to what we have in my place. The interviews I've had so far have made me realize that we have some things in common. Had I not conducted interviews with them [participants], I would never have known about what they think about other ethnic groups, especially those in the North. I'm happy they've realized so many people in the country are going through the same ordeal (Reflective journal 27/04/18).

Our interaction and shared stories encouraged them and changed their perception about me as they would think about everyone from the North as an oppressor. We found a common ground where we understood each other's viewpoint.

Participation and Period of Data Collection

The research expanded over a period of five months. After my pilot investigation (1st July - 28th August 2017)[169], I discovered it was necessary to adjust my research strategy in order to suit the emerging phenomena for instance, the rift within MOSOP and women's marginalization, which I had no idea about before the exercise. It became necessary to do a literature review, as a result, my research questions and the nature of my questions to participants changed to some extent. Also, there was need to engage with people from the six kingdoms as opposed to just one kingdom during the pilot.

It was necessary to adjust my time for both the individual and focus group interviews. The individual interview session ran for 45 minutes, while the focus group took 1 hour, as against the 1 hour and 2 hours respectively I had during the pilot. The focus group discussions ran concurrently with the individual interviews, based on emergent issues that required further exploration. As I became familiar with the nature of interviews, I decided (for the focus group sessions) to select participants based on their interest and understanding of the issues under investigation. It involved those who participated in the individual interview, and were actively involved in the movement, MOSOP.

As explained earlier, I introduced *Pidgin English*[170] because of the difficulties I encountered from translations and transcriptions of interviews that were carried out in the local language during the pilot investigation. Also, I transcribed my interviews immediately they were carried out rather than piling them up.

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[169] My master's research took a quantitative approach, so this research was my first experience of engaging with a qualitative-PAR research method. Apart from being a novice in this research design, I wondered about the practical implications of how it is carried out. The pilot experience gave me good knowledge about Ogoniland and the necessary things I needed to know before the fieldwork. Details about changes made after this initial experience are explained in the subsequent sections.
[170] See appendix 5- *Pidgin* interview transcript.

Apart from the reason of quality and valid data, I decided to do the research in all the kingdoms because of factors such as the Ogoni sense of identity and belonging and place. However, the research was carried out in five kingdoms. I was not able to conduct any research with any member from the Babbe kingdom due to the limited time, and the difficulties my gatekeeper encountered in getting anyone from any of the communities. Within the five months period of field experience, 125 participants (20 semi-structured individual interviews[171]; 13 focus group discussions and 9 observations)[172] participated in the research. There were four to eight participants in each of the focus group discussions.

Figure 8: Photo of Individual interview with an Ogoni chief

Figure 9: Photo of focus group interview with some young female Ogoni youth

Figure 10: Photo of focus group interview with some male Ogoni youth

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[171] See figure 8.
[172] See figure 9 & 10.

Selection of Participants and their Participation

To identify participants, I used the purposeful sampling technique (Patton 1990) to select participants who had knowledge and experience of the issue under investigation. The choice of participants was made by my gatekeeper who, as explained before, understood my research context; his competence facilitated the recruitment of participants. One of his major difficulties was trying to convince potential participants about the value of the research process. Some were disinterested; others prioritised more immediate needs than the empowerment and research processes that he talked to them about. The patriarchal nature of the Ogoni society made it difficult to get a good representation of women.

Those who participated in the research ranged from ages 17-84. The research included the elderly because it was necessary to juxtapose their ideas with that of the youth. However, 80% of the research populations were between the ages of 17 to 40. The elders and women comprised 10% each. As regards their rights, participants were told they could withdraw from the research at any time. I made it a point of interest that they had a choice to participate or not. I felt it would have a direct and positive effect on the level of their participation in the process. Participants were contacted directly rather than going through other members, like the chiefs of the communities, as is always the case in almost every African culture. The non-obligatory approach served as an empowering experience as most participants were keen to be involved in the research process rather than feeling disempowered.

From my observation and as I followed up with my gatekeeper on his effort to negotiate with participants, female participants were more likely than male participants to have their decision to participate influenced by their partners or their families. As an African, I think this is a common factor with the patriarchal system, which is that women will have to consult their husbands before deciding to engage in such activity. Of these, some indicated that if their husbands had been against their participation they would have declined, whereas others indicated that the final decision was their own to make. It is however, fair to say that there were some female participants who actively participated and addressed issues from their point of view. Obviously, the educated women were much more outspoken and willing to narrate their stories than those who were not educated. Particularly, there was one young lady (an educated and active member of MOSOP) who worked collaboratively with my gatekeeper to mobilise the women. She participated in some of the focus group discussions with men, and it was interesting how she insisted on her thoughts about the plight of Ogoni women.

Self-censorship: An outsider's dilemma

As a researcher-participant, I was conscious of my role as the one who will present the findings in writing, so, I was always looking for truths, or the closest that we perceived to be "true". As a non-Ogoni participant, I always asked myself: is it safe to say this? Or what kind of harmful consequences might flow from our interaction either for myself personally or participants? This is due to the fact that I worried that saying something negative about the Ogonis may lead to negative consequences, like causing my abrupt exit from the field or increasing pressure on participants. As an outsider researcher, I worried that not getting hold of the information will lead me to not representing participants' views, but at the same time afraid of testing the truth for fear that my "negative" probe might create tension between participants and myself.

The ideal is that researchers have to make decisions about what to put in or take out of the research. For this research, these decisions related to protecting individual participants, protecting communities or protecting the movement- MOSOP. So, the self-censoring here comes from the instinct of self-protection in a context that is one of control over my activities in Ogoni.

Semi-structured and Focus Group Interviews

Semi-structured and focus group interviews are widely used in PAR studies (Fals-Boda & Anishur Rahman 1991; MacDonald 2012). I adopted these methods because they are flexible and they allowed me to exchange information with less restriction than in the quantitative closed-ended survey that I carried out during my master's research. They opened up good space for dialogue with participants, who thought it was a good opportunity to talk about their issues and to find ways of solving them. Considering my status as a Catholic priest, which is seen as a privileged position in Nigerian society, I aimed at a non-hierarchical relationship, which was achieved by maintaining some good rapport with participants and putting on casual outfits[173] for interview sessions.

Even though due to my participation in the parish pastoral work mostly at weekends, most participants knew my status as a priest, I still revealed my identity at the beginning of each interview session, emphasizing sociology rather than religion. However, in some instances where issues concerning religion came into our discussions, I animated it from the point of view of religion as sociology, by critically analyzing the issues for the sake of knowledge, rather than theology which deals with incontrovertible truth. I responded to questions in the best possible way that provoked positive responses in order to give participants appropriate ways of conceptualizing

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[173] Priests in Nigeria are easily identified by their habits- soutane/cassock or the roman collar, which that makes them stand out and in most cases inaccessible.

issues and making connections (Holstein & Gubrium 1995) with their daily experiences for the sake of change.

As I moderated the sessions, my closeness to the participants and understanding of the research interview process strongly influenced my capacity to confidently engage in the interview process. However, I agree with Scheurich (1997) that interview interaction is fundamentally indeterminate. We cannot capture and categorize the complex play of conscious and unconscious thoughts, feelings, fears, powers, desires and needs of both the interviewer and interviewee since there is no stable "reality" or "meaning" that can be represented. Since these thoughts, feelings, fears and desires are not visible in the data transcriptions, the quotations from my research journal, as reflected in this chapter, are evidence of my reflexive reactions. Nevertheless, my subjective contributions are open to interpretation.

The Effect of Cultural/Experiential Affinity
The most significant social issues that influenced the interview process are the idea of "cultural affinity" (Oakley 1981) and "experiential affinity" (Boushel 2000:36). In the context of her research entitled, *Interviewing Women: A Contradiction in Terms*, Oakley argues that the traditional paradigm of social science research emphasizes the detached approach of the researcher as a mechanical instrument of data collection, where the researcher and 'researched' are de-personalized participants in the research process.

Her approach notes the "paradigm of the 'proper' interview which appeals to such values as objectivity, detachment, hierarchy and 'science' as an important cultural activity which takes priority over people's more individualized concerns" (Oakley 1981:38). She recounted how this traditional approach would not allow her to answer the many questions from participants in her research project; also, talked about having to ask participants for a lot of their time and asking them very intrusive questions as part of the research.

According to the traditional approach to social science research, as a medical doctor and as a woman, who had herself gone through childbirth - the subject of her study - she was not supposed to give participants a simple answer to their questions. However, she understood what they were going through and was happy to answer questions from participants, which dismantled the hierarchical relationship traditionally upheld between researchers and 'researched'. This approach of gender affinity between participants and herself was rewarding, hence, she concluded that the personal involvement of the researcher in the struggles of the 'researched' "is the condition under which people come to know each other and to admit others into their lives" (Oakley 1981:58).

On her part, Boushel (2000) introduced the "experiential affinity" and "experiential interdependence" to help conceptualize the knowledge and power differentials, which may impede researchers pursuing anti-discriminatory aims. She recognized the concerns others have about this approach, especially given its potential to promote "essentialist assumptions" (Humphries & Truman 1994 in Boushel 2000:76) and "cultural insiderism" (Gilroy 1990 in Boushel 2000:76), where a number of fixed variables are used in constructing the reality of a given group. She argues that this partial overlap between perspective and experience that exists between the researcher and the participants can be conceptualized and labelled as "experiential affinity" (Boushel 2000:76), while those of advantaged groups researching advantaged groups might best be conceptualized as "experiential interdependence".

These approaches (cultural/experiential affinity), while I am mindful of their limitations, have been of great importance to my research. Having the experiences of how it feels to be someone from a minority group, I understood and shared some of the pains and frustrations of the Ogoni participants. For example, the dominant false narrative shared by the three dominant ethnic blocs which has resulted in a vicious cycle of entrenching oppression. As one young graduate participant described:

> This may sound interesting to some people ... most times, I find myself thinking about my ethnic minority status; the insecurity is just too much and we cannot be ourselves [Nigerian way of saying someone has low self-esteem]. …no matter how hard you work, there is still at the back of your mind that feeling that there is no hope for you… this is our pain (PVGK 01/06/2018).

From the expression above, I could locate the participant's struggle within my experience and could understand the context in which these words were uttered. Cultural/experiential affinity made it possible for this participant (and others at different instances during the research process) to open up to me since I identified myself as someone from a minority ethnic group. This was especially more striking where participants kept using the word "us", "we" against "them". This was captured in phrases such as "how we are treated…" and "they are not fair to us…" Thus, these shared commonalities were cardinal as they informed my perspective and allowed me gained greater insights into the Ogoni struggle.

Probing Interview Technique
According to Burgess (1982:107), interviews of this nature provide the opportunity for the researcher to probe deeply in order "to uncover new clues, open up new dimensions of a problem and to secure vivid, accurate inclusive accounts that are based on personal experience". Drawing from this view, questions were not just about the change that participants desire, but also questions about how the outcome of the research will improve their struggle. It was important to establish meanings and interpretations that participants attach to their experience. As such, there was

repetition of initial question when participants seemed to be wandering off the point; explanatory probes to follow up incomplete statements made by participants; focused probes used to obtain specific information and silent probe or pause when participants were either reluctant or very slow to answer the question posed (Legard et al. 2003).

The focus group sessions helped in generating insightful and useful data in timely and cost-effective manner (Davies 2008). Following Walker's (1985) "topic guide" structure (though not strictly as giving out format to participants before arriving the interview scene), where interview format was circulated to all participants before the actual interview started. It contained the research topic, study aims, research questions; interview questions were not included. Some of the questions asked during the discussions included: (1) what are your thoughts about the Ogoni society in the past and present? (2) What are your contributions to the ongoing struggle for justice? (3) What do you think about violence in Ogoni? These were some of the questions that helped in the generation of the data.

The Challenge of Hierarchy and Status in Interviews
Most participants in both individual and focus group interviews were not professionals, but had knowledge in the research topic as I explained at the beginning of every session. Nevertheless, my assumption is that there were some inferiority feelings shown by some participants, who thought a professional knowledge hierarchy existed between us, based on the classical distinction between objective, fact-related knowledge in contrast to knowledge as subjective (Raheim et al. 2016). Although it was challenging in some instances to get the participants to describe and reflect on real-life situations, it was interesting to see how they acted and made judgments in specific challenging situations.

Flyvbjerg (2001) argues that the study of power relations should go beyond the normative level and be anchored in the real practices of qualitative research. Hence, I have anchored my analysis of shifts and ambivalence in our relationship, by drawing upon concrete examples from the research. Thus, these two methods held a common aim of diminishing the distance between participants and myself, and created an anti-authoritative researcher- participant relationship. The scenarios that emerged challenged me to re-think and readjust what needed to be adjusted (Raheim et al. 2016) as the research progressed.

Limitations of focus groups and research constraints
According to Krueger and Casey (2015), there are limitations as regards focus groups especially from the point of view of skills required to conduct the meetings, issues associated with group dynamics and data analysis. However, in order to counter such shortcomings, it is important to distinguish between contextual constructionism (Kitzinger 1994) and the realist perspective on

focus groups (Krueger and Casey 2015). According to Freeman (2006), these differences are in the areas of group membership, homogeneity, interaction and generalizability of results. In the constructionist perspective, which is the approach here, pre-existing groups are considered potentially useful in providing "naturalistic" exchanges as against the realist discountenance of pre-existing groups as engendering bias. Homogeneity is weak in constructionism because having participants with marked status differences (heterogeneity) increases the generation of divergent views likely to deepen understanding.

Homogenous groups (or groups of equals) may lead to easier conformity among group members and thus inhibit detailed discussion (Freeman 2006). That is why the selection of participants in this research was wide ranging to ensure that all key groups are included and their perspectives taken into account. Interaction is stronger in the constructionist perspective than in the realist perspective where it is only useful for generating discussion on the subject of interest (Freeman 2006). Unlike the realist view where results are transferable, attempts to generalize results in constructionism are weak as theoretical insights are taken in the context of the research. Although results are potentially transferable, that is not the focus; it is rather decided by the reader (Freeman 2006).

Prior to this research, I had no knowledge about interviews, but with my experience of working with people in parish and hospital pastoral situations, I was able to moderate focus groups discussions. However, some of the issues I dealt with during the focus group sessions were: some participants dominating the discussions or tried to prevent or influence others from expressing themselves as they wanted for fear that they were giving out sensitive issues. For example, as in almost all African cultures, it was obvious that some middle-aged participants were disquiet or embarrassed whenever some young participants were making reference to the corruption of Ogoni elders or chiefs. At such point, I was seen as an outsider who should not hear or participate in such discussion. I considered these issues as falling within the nature of PAR to be handled through strict anonymity. Also, differences in participants levels (hierarchical organization) especially in the relationship between men and women.

The research field was full of surprises. There was a particular incident where a participant arrived at a venue as scheduled but changed his mind not to do the interview, after I had waited for 2 hours. I cannot be certain as to why they decided otherwise, but from the discussions I had with my gatekeeper and some official members of MOSOP (since he was a top official), he, possibly, was afraid that the interview would lead him to reveal some sensitive information about MOSOP. I noted the incident in my research journal:

> …he did not answer my gatekeeper's calls initially, but called back after an hour of waiting to say he was on his way coming to the office where he decided the interview would take place. He arrived after we waited for three hours and did not care or say anything to me but went straight to begin a meeting with a

group of people who were also waiting for him. It was so frustrating. I asked the receptionist to remind him about our presence and she came back to say he asked us to wait for another 30 minutes. Still, he never showed up. I wish he told me beforehand that he was not interested in the interview than keep me waiting for hours. It is clear he refused to give the interview and I am not sure there was anything I would have done to get him do it. But I am happy that I was able to reach him on the phone via text message to say I needed to go because I had another interview later in the day. He never replied my text message. (Reflective journal 01/05/2018).

Though participants themselves decided about interview venues, most of them were very sensitive about the location of interview due to security reasons. One participant (a former top MOSOP official) decided that we have the interview in a hotel. We arrived early and stood close to the entrance gate wondering and suspecting everyone going into the hotel to be our potential participant, since my gatekeeper had never met him in person, he would not say if he arrived or not. It was later that we realized he was among those who walked into the hotel. He came out after few minutes walked straight to us and introduced himself, after which he led us into the hotel building. At his instruction, we had the interview under one of the canopies on the compound. I did not ask about the initial experience but he explained after the interview, that he had fears around meeting us, as he was not sure who he was meeting. This was common with official members of MOSOP for fear of being spied upon by government agents. He revealed that the interview would have been in his house if he knew I was a priest. My reaction to this incident was:

> The experience today tells me I am yet to understand some of these reactions. I have to say I was worried about the strange action of my interviewee today. It was so difficult for me to be comfortable during the interview due to the strange atmosphere that he [interviewee] created. It was difficult to concentrate on the interview. It felt like I was talking to him [interviewee] but my mind wondered far away. The only thing that kept me going was that the interaction took place on the hotel compound and not inside the building (Reflective journal 30/04/18).

I had a similar experience with a Shell worker, an Ogoni who, just before we started the interview, told me categorically that he is strictly guided by Shell laws not to discuss about their activities unless written permission is obtained. I explained my position as not seeking information for anyone but for my future pastoral ministry. I stated clearly that we were not going to talk about Shell's activities in Ogoni. He was satisfied and we had a good discussion. I made this journal entry upon reflecting on this experience:

> I have been wondering all this while about the attitudes of some participants as regards access. It may not just be the main reason, but it is interesting how this issue was addressed today. I think I agree with the idea that most of these young men (MOSOP members) are into negotiating with Shell for self-interest, and now I understand why they suspect and would resist an interview until they are sure. I think it is important to build a clear strategy around negotiating access (Reflective journal 13/05/2018).

Observation in Communities as a Participant
The observation process was for me to gain knowledge and a deeper understating of what I shared with participants during the interviews; to learn the perspectives held by study population (Mack et al. 2011). The observation took place around the villages/communities, at MOSOP meetings, religious gatherings, community (town hall) meetings, on local soccer pitches, and while I visited

their local markets and shops. The observation was carried across the five kingdoms; but not in every community that I had interviews. The privilege I had was to have an insider as my gatekeeper, who knew exactly where it was possible for me to go and the places he referred to as "no go areas" these were places anyone could be harmed. This made the observation process very difficult. Every step I took was like I was courting danger, so it was hard for me to concentrate on my agenda. Hence, it was not possible for me to be seen with my field notebook. I only observed events while in the field and wrote them down afterwards. The experience made me appreciate the ethics committee advice not to use a camera in such research environment.

I closely observed the livelihood portfolios and activities in the various places mentioned above. I was able to get a broader picture of the socio-economic and cultural contexts; how the people make meaning of their own life and others' actions in their society in group settings. As Kirk and Miller (1986) remarked, field observations are a reflection of the observer's cognitive idiosyncrasies; about one's own thoughts and theories as regards the everyday experience of individuals and groups.

The period of observation placed me in the midst of the Ogoni society (Angrosino 2007) as opposed to the individual or focus group interviews with selected individuals in specified locations. The experience afforded me the opportunity to contrast what I heard during the interviews with the actions on the ground. For example, it was difficult for some of the male participants to understand why women complain about being marginalized. However, the reality said something different, as I observed, women were the ones preoccupied with home responsibilities and working on the farm; I hardly ever saw the men going to farm or selling in their local markets. This particular situation was exposed in a more realistic way. As Tehmina (2003) remarks, the authentic flavour of the observational data comes through the researcher's contact with the social reality.

While some residents were suspicious of my presence, others, especially those I had interviews with and who recognized me and did not bother because they knew what my mission was. Some thought my presence was for interviews and wanted to talk to me. However, the experience gave me insights as regard the everyday experience of the people. There is the danger of insecurity caused by the armed military presence around the communities, which makes them suspicious of every stranger. Residents could also mistake a stranger as one of the "bad boys"[174] who terrorize their own people. The feud between the two rival groups has caused so much damage in a number of communities. Also, the gas flaring which caused contamination of Ogoni land, water and air is the major cause of the multiple risks in Ogoni. Residents consistently expressed signs of frustrations, which I assume was due to lack of basic needs.

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[174] The Deebam and Deewell cultists- see chapter 1

I was filled with so much anxiety as I tried to remain focused and to know what was going on. As the observation process progressed, it was obvious that anxiety was my companion (Glesne & Peshkin 1992). But, it would be unrealistic to suggest that my presence did not affect the dynamics of people's behaviour. It was quite interesting that behaviours that were not expressed during the interviews were captured this time. The following extract from my field notes illustrates this idea:

> …interestingly, people who ordinarily consider their neighbouring communities as 'enemies' [land disputes mostly] met on neutral ground [e.g. market squares or at games] and it seemed there was no problems and offence against each other. It was difficult to know it was a gathering of people from different communities. However, occasionally, especially at meetings or games, there were dramatic incidences that I did not see during the interviews… strong disagreements and arguments that left some people deeply upset. At some meetings, individuals left the meeting in anger. …anger expressed during games were quick to evaporate; people gave up their anger easily and continued what they were doing (Observation note 19/08/18).

Data Triangulation

As the research was carried out within the framework of PAR, which goes with the 3 methods adopted, the rationale for selecting the aforementioned methods is to transcend the limitations of an individual method so as to triangulate data generation in order to produce more effective problem solving tools (Streubert & Carpenter 2011). The methodological triangulation ensured credibility of the research findings and illuminated the issues from different perspective (Sarantakos 2013) especially on the Ogoni social reality perceived by the younger generation as opposed to the older generation. Applying these tools helped me to cross check the authenticity of data. For example, I discussed the same issues in focus groups and individual interviews. In some cases, the outcomes of the discussions were different, so additional research to explain the disparities were carried out.

In addition, I kept an electronic research reflective journal (Lincoln & Guba 1985) where I documented my experiences throughout the research process. It included observational notes, comment made by participants and my personal reflections about events that took place and how they might have been done differently. The methodological decisions I made throughout the research process were quite significant to the study.

I was aware of the relevance of personal relationships in gaining access to the field and generating trust while being fully aware of the risks involved and the way it might affect the engagement of research participants. I ensured that participants were the primary authority of what constitute risks and can have an open discussion around it while collectively agreeing how to manage it. I also did not take for granted the social positioning of both the participants and myself to ensure different perspectives, while the capacity of PAR to adapt to evolving socio-political contexts had been seriously tested throughout the research.

Researcher/Participants Interactions

The qualitative PAR approach adopted created the space for me to look for and accept multiple interpretations of realities. It is not possible, however, to demonstrate here the outcome of the research without pinpointing the complex situations that emerged. In the first place, combining the research and management of the participants in the field posed few pragmatic problems at different points. How to handle the experiences of participation from my perspective and from the perspective of participants how to separate the experiences of participants from mine as a researcher was a challenge.

Participants' Relationship with the Topic of Research
Throughout the research I kept participants informed of what the process was and what was expected of us. Apart from being respectful to participants, I made sure they realized that there were no hidden agenda on my part in order to gain their interest, commitment and engagement in the process. Relying on Ife's (1995) position that genuine participation was more likely to occur when people perceive their participation to be of importance, I adopted several strategies to keep participants informed. For example, I urged my gatekeeper who negotiated with participants, to be clear about the research topic and about their (participants') role in the process and how the research relates to them as well as my intention for the research. I also reiterated this before the interviews began. I expressed my interest in their struggle and made them realized that their contribution was important, as it was not for me to impose my understanding and assumptions upon theirs. The following comment from one of the participants clearly illustrates a sense of what occurred: "[…] you are clear about the whole process and our expectation" (FGPJDB 29/04/2018).

However, in trying to keep participants informed, it may have been perceived as both empowering and disempowering, depending on how others might think of how the information was delivered. Furthermore, it could be possible that the information received was too much and overwhelmed participants. But having established from the beginning what information participants would like to receive and would find useful, it may have served to maximize the likelihood that the experience of the process was an empowering one.

The empirical examples in this work are clear indications of participants' reports of their engagement in this research. One young participant reported about their current social reality like this: we are now fully aware of what our problems are […] (PTSB 20/04/2018).

Another young participant said,

> We were living together peacefully, we share whatever we have together without having any grudge in mind against our brothers not until our late leader, Ken Saro-Wiwa, came up to reorganise the entire

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Ogoni society and Niger Delta communities concerning our own resources that have been taken from us decades of years without compensation. Since then we began to know what we have been losing since all this while, and then crisis began to come in, in the sense that the federal government of this country they neglected this particular side of the country-Ogoni (PNSKM 09/05/2018).

And:

The farming and fishing we have here in Ogoniland are already been polluted by Shell. That is the beginning of the struggle. Even when we plant, we don't harvest good fruit or yam or whatever, and when you go to the creek side, you go there like in the '70s, early '80s, I can tell you that if persons like me went to fishing, I can come back home happily, confidently the whole of today and tomorrow we won't bother about going to market to buy fish. But today it's no longer like that (PNSKM 09/05/2018).

These data excerpts are clear examples of how participants understood the research from their perspectives. They discovered that our engagement with the topic articulated their social world- the discussions spoke directly to their challenges. Despite their engagement with the most sensitive issues (human rights and self-determination) that have left them at the margins of the Nigerian society, participants did not report any concern or regret regarding their decision to participate in the research process. This was due to the trust established and for the fact that they were informed that their participation was optional and could be discontinued at any time if they were not comfortable. Participants' demonstration of their readiness to participate was articulated by a young participant during my pilot study: "we want the whole world to know about our problem" (FG-Giokoo PBDB 13/07/17). It was clear from our interactions that participants felt it was their responsibility to cause any change in their society.

The point here is that informed consent was prioritised for the sake of trust. And from the voices of participants, I am confident to assert that their overwhelming and consistent responses show they were motivated for altruistic reasons (Soule et al. 2016). That the research will help them find answers to their problem, which is achieving justice for the entire Ogoni society; and their appreciation of the knowledge that was generated made them believed their efforts will facilitate change. As captured by one participant:

[…] the solution to it [Ogoni problem] will be that we have to go back to the drawing board [...] and come together and live in harmony. All the kingdoms of Ogoni not minding political affiliation or dialect or educational qualification, we have to come together and think of the past, how we were […] yes if we can come together and discuss we will overcome this stress […] (PPNG 21/04/2018).

Following the explanation above, I totally agree with Birch & Miller's (2000) argument that qualitative inquiry commands intimacy. And it is more likely that research which directly engages the subjectivity of participants will have more impact on them. Our interactions through the individual and focus group interviews created an environment that brought participants and myself into regular, intimate and confident positions, where we spoke about our ordinary life context, particularly with respect to their own ongoing oppressed situation. This conscious raising approach tapped into their world, and helped them to articulate and reflect on their individual experiences,

which were re-evaluated (as participants perspectives are not static; see Koelsch 2013) during the feedback process.

Participants' Decision to Participate and their Experience during Interviews

According to Denzin and Giardina (2007), to be critically conscious demands attention to the variations of participants' recruitment and representations of their voices. Participants' decision to participate in the research depended on the socio-cultural context - the language, lifestyle, social and economic values and demographic factors; their trust and understanding of the subject under investigation. It is important to note that I took care of participants' transport expenses, especially those who travelled long distances to the interview venue.

The socio-cultural context in which the research was planned and participants' interest in the research topic made it easier for the recruitment of participants. Critically speaking, the interpretations of participants' lived experiences were grounded in the present Ogoni cultural complexities (Denzin 1989), which in some instances created power distance, roles, and diversity of statuses. At the same time, it is evident that there was flexibility as regards how these were perceived and managed. Participants were clear about their participation in the research. One of the participants said this: "I am very happy about the discussion because we are talking about the youth, how to change our own story to new one" (FGPULB 14/05/18).

Most participants were happy with the process, especially about the prospects of building-up a unified structure that will facilitate the arrival of justice in Ogoniland. The following comments from some youth confirm this:

> […] this has made me to know and talk about MOSOP (FGPALK 11/06/18).
>
> I think it's the only way we can help ourselves to save our situation here (FGPULLP 06/05/18).
>
> […] I'm very happy that this meeting has taught me so many things about our people [MOSOP]. […] now I know what we can do even though it is not possible for now (FGPDBAP 06/05/18).

It was fascinating that one young participant referenced an interview he participated in with an NGO group but thought it did not meet his expectation as did our discussion. He explained why he thought the process was good:

> I feel this is the way this thing [interview] should be [...] I've work with some of this NGO but I didn't see them asking people questions like this, and we were not allowed to talk like this […] (FGPUHPK 11/06/18).

Both the individual and focus group sessions solicited participants' perspectives. During the discussions, I encouraged participants to ask questions, and the reason for doing so was to increase their interest in the process. Indeed, their questions showed their awareness of the current social reality in Ogoni, and their anxiety as regards a solution. Following the principles of qualitative research, I eschewed judgment (Denzin & Lincoln 2011) and my impression was that participants

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felt relief as a result of our discussions of their marginal situation. Beyond the intended academic purpose, the qualitative interviews suggest some benefit to participants. This was how one young participant reacted to the entire process:

> For me, I thought our discussions went on well. I think I was given the opportunity to say what I think, and I am happy that people [other participants] listened to me. And I am happy that we are allowed to speak and our message is taken on board. I am even happy that you are recording it in your tape so that you can take it to Europe. So, my advice is that as we are open to tell you our problem, try and let people help us too (PTSB 20/04/2018).

With the comment above, I am convinced that the research process had positive effects on them. Thus: (1) participants were delighted that they had the chance to share their stories and to see that their individual stories created a voice in addressing a topic of interest to them; (2) that their stories were heard in full and understood without judgment; (3) and that some were fascinated with the idea that the findings of the research will be brought back to them for validation purposes.

Nevertheless, Ortiz (1995) speculates why such positive results might be found in qualitative interviews: participants may want to please and are reluctant to offend by reporting negative outcomes; and those who voluntarily participate in research studies may represent a selection of bias in favour of those who had more positive things to say about the research. Though these speculations sound interesting, I would reiterate that the participatory structure provided a relational atmosphere, and my interpretation of the participants' experiences is derived from the relationship that we both shared. To borrow Birch and Miller's (2000) words, the relationship was intimate and non-judgmental.

Participants' Experience with others' Presence
While it appeared that there were some barriers[175] in the individual interviews, participants showed some amount of confidence at the focus group interviews. However, it was obvious that some participants still had no courage to reflect on the issue at hand due to their being suppressed by the government for decades. This was justified by one middle age participant:

> … most [… participants] have not had the opportunity to express […] [themselves] openly as some of us are doing now. [..] the main reason as I can tell is that we [Ogoni] have been suppressed for a long time, and many of us will be afraid to say anything because we don't know who is who. Some of us don't care whether they kill us or not, we have to say what we know (FGPVDB 14/05/2018).

The above reaction reveals a significant challenge and why some Ogoni members lack the confidence to participate in any meaningful action that can generate positive outcome to benefit the entire Ogoni society. Though there were mixed responses from participants, a good number of them thought the strategy of bringing people together in a group for discussion was good and more effective. Some participants noted the benefit of having the discussion in a group:

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[175] Mostly from the point of view of sitting before myself as a stranger

It is better to have this in one group so that everybody will benefit from what other people are saying (FGPGDB 14/05/2018).

Everyone must hear what we are saying (FGPBBCB 14/05/2018).

Participants felt the focus group discussion was important and provided opportunity to develop their confidence in each other, in order to build skills which will make them competent as regards their fight for justice. To support this idea, Ife (1995) identified five conditions for participation: (1) that people will participate if they feel the issue is important; (2) people must feel that their action will make a difference; (3) that different forms of participation must be acknowledged and valued; (4) that people must be enabled to participate and supported in their participation; (5) and that structures and processes must not be alienating. Following Ife's principles, participants believe that their participation will lead to change, and also acknowledged their satisfaction with the process compared to their experiences with past researcher work.

Participants' Voices and Experiences

One of the principles of qualitative research is that it allows for multiple interpretations of people's lives and experiences. The emancipatory strategies adopted were dialogue, reflexive questioning and listening. By way of searching for meanings and objective representation, we engaged in the process of reflection and questioned the current oppressive structure in Ogoniland. As a result, participants were able to build knowledge that helped them find solutions to their problems. But due to the nature of qualitative research which is to portray people's lived experiences, it is important to acknowledge the fact that it is not possible to be emotionally detached and be truly objective in representing people. Hence, what I have articulated here is simply my interpretation of participants' voices and experiences and its validation by participants. These comments revealed how participants regarded having the opportunity to speak and being listened to were important:

I think the way we have participated in this meeting is good. We [Ogoni people] want to speak but we are not allowed to speak. You can see that our youth are interested in talking to you. You are allowing them to talk, and I can see this as important way of telling people that we are tired with the situation that the government have [has] put us in (PSMG 03/06/2018).

The excerpt emphasized the importance of participation and the opportunity to contribute. What this indicates therefore is that participation is about being part of a process, and this is in line with the PAR principle, which regarded participants as part of decision-making. It is evident from the excerpt that Ogonis have had limited access to participate in research about their lives.

The Significance of Ethical Issues

The PAR methodology espouses a unique set of values and principles that guide the processes of investigation. As Fals-Boda (1979) and Lewin (1946) opined, it reflects an ethical commitment that creates conditions for social change. It is important however, that it shares similar ethical

considerations that arise from more traditional methodologies: harms and benefits of research, the rights of participants to information, privacy and anonymity, and the responsibilities of the researcher to act with integrity (Kindon et al. 2010). As the objects of inquiry for this research were human beings, and for the purpose of good interaction and respect for those involved, Gibbon (2002) suggests, it is important to: 1) try to achieve mutual respect; 2) be honest about my own objectives; 3) be honest about participants' interest; 4) be clear about the research findings. To share the research findings with participants and policy makers who will be able to influence some positive impact on the community; 5) and be clear that some of participants' expectations cannot be guaranteed.

To this effect, the following subsections discuss these essential ethical principles observed by the research: confidentiality and informed consent, avoidance invasion of privacy, autonomy, deception and causing harm to participants' trustworthiness and authenticity and credibility.

Confidentiality and Informed Consent
As explained in chapter 3, gaining informed consent from the research participants was the topmost priority before commencing the field work.[176] The process involved making clear what they were consenting to and their freedom to withdraw their consent at any time. Apart from taking care of participants' fare to interview venues, I made it clear to participants that their participation in the research would not bring them any direct or monetary benefits. The issue of confidentiality was also made clear to participants; they were assured that their personal identity would not be disclosed. Consent was obtained in written form before each research process began. My ethical approval allowed for verbal consent (to be taken on my tape recorder) but there was no such incident throughout the research, as those who participated filled and signed the forms.

Participants were informed about the use of a recording device, which was visibly displayed during the interviews. The audio interviews were downloaded on my computer as soon as the discussions were over, and, unless I had another commitment, I transcribed immediately. The audio interviews and transcripts were saved on my iCloud as soon as these processes were over. No information regarding interviews was saved on my computer while in the field, due to the security situation. I kept all hard copies of consent forms in the filing cabinet of the parish priest all through the fieldwork period. My learning process as regards the need for confidentiality grew stronger as the research progressed. No participant withdrew their consent.

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[176] See appendix 8 & 9.

While analyzing the data, due consideration was placed on deriving true meaning to the participants' explanations. Even though the majority of participants waived their anonymity, the research coded participants' identity to protect them from any harm.

Invasion of Privacy
Aware of the conflict sensitive nature of my research environment, it was necessary to be cautious about what constituted a private or sensitive issue to participants. My questions focused on issues related to the research rather than their religious beliefs, sexual life, income and marriage life. The participatory approach allowed them to raise issues that they felt were necessary for them to talk about, which were related to the topic under investigation. But I have to say that in some of the individual interviews participants made reference to some sensitive issues which they would not talk about in a group discussion, for example, linking the misbehaviours of the current Ogoni youth to inappropriate home upbringing. In this particular case, I did follow up with questions since it falls within the scope of the research. Also, they revealed some sensitive information in relation to the relationship between the chiefs and the common Ogoni people. One middle aged participants said this about the chiefs:

> we are facing serious issues now with our elders, our chiefs. You see these boys (the Deebam and Deewell cultists), our chiefs are using some of them to protect them. This thing I am telling you is true but we don't want to talk about it. The government is using most of them now. Is giving them money so that they cannot talk, and because they are afraid of what will happen to them, they use the boys as their watchmen. So, in this [these] our communities, we see this [these] things happening but we cannot say anything (PFTDGG 02/05/2018).

From my interpretation of their body language, these were information they would not reveal to anyone (especially to non-Ogonis). My assumption is that some chose to discuss about these issues because of my position as a priest - a *man of God*.[177] Or, it was based on their frustration of the breakdown of their social-cultural value systems, which some consider a major factor in the current crisis in Ogoniland.

Autonomy
At some of the brief evaluation sessions with participants while in the field, I discussed the idea of autonomy (see Wood 2006). That the knowledge derived was not just to satisfy my academic purpose but that they will, as well, benefit from the outcome of the research. I shared with participants my aim to return to Nigeria after my study to work in the area of development. I informed them of my decision to share with them the results from the findings[178] since it is about

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[177] A common phrase that is used in Nigeria for pastors. It carries with it an image of trust, reliable positivity that people repose in religious leaders.
[178] See appendix 10 for sample of my reflection with participants.

transforming their lives[179]. Participants were also informed about the possibility of sharing the research feedback with policymakers and NGOs in the country, who may find it useful to engage in any development work with the people. However, it is important to note that some participants did not consider this useful and did not show any interest in the expected result.

Deception and Causing harm to Participants

The feeling of being manipulated or cheated as well as issues such as breach of trust by researchers and NGO groups were raised by participants at some of our interviews. For example, at the very first interview during my pilot investigation and just as we were about to start the focus group discussion after explanation of my research, a middle-aged participant stated unless I reveal who sent me to get information from them, none of them will say anything to me. He stated categorically that, the Ogoni people have been fooled (FG-Kpor PSK 13/07/17).

He made it clear that researchers had promised them (possibly some benefits) and never returned to them after their research. None of the other participants uttered a word while the dialogue lasted for at least for 5-10 minutes, but through their body language, it appeared they supported the idea. For the fact that it was at my first interview ever, I must say that I was frightened because I knew nothing about their past experience with researchers or that I said something implicating while explaining my research. There was no alternative way for me at that particular point. It was a critical moment for me and it urged me to go over my research objectives again, and explain further about what they were expected to do and their benefit from the research outcome. I re-emphasized that they could withdraw their consent if they desired.

I was surprised my explanation made sense eventually and they allowed the session to begin after we had spent almost an hour on the issue. During our conversion, nearly all participants lamented how funding agencies or development organizations (both local and international) have never consulted them to know about their needs. The same participant said this:

> no one has ever spoken to us about our problem as you have done… we have never been given the privilege to talk about the problems in our land (FG1-Kpor, PSK 13/07/17).

Obviously, there have been instances where researchers have used (deceived) participants in Ogoni to achieve their goal.

In another focus group interview, I faced a great pressure that left me with no option but offer participants money. It was at the end of the interview that they insisted that I must offer them something for the information they shared with me. It was a lesson I learnt unexpectedly but informed my approach and preparedness for the rest of my stay in the field; though such experience

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[179] See Touraine cited in Moss et al. 2019; Bergold & Thomas 2012.

never occurred again. However, on my volition, I decided with my gatekeeper to offer light refreshments (biscuits and some juice drinks) to participants at the end of every interview.

Trustworthiness and authenticity

Trustworthiness is a crucial aspect of any scientific endeavour and cannot be compromised (Mason 2002). However, Riege (2003) argued that trustworthiness within the constructivist approach cannot be addressed in the same way as in positivist research. As a result, qualitative scholars[180] have devised measures of ensuring trustworthiness of qualitative approaches which are comparable to criteria employed in the positivist research tradition.

My use of the three research instruments, explained in chapter 3, was to ensure validity of the data, since a valid research must be reliable, consistent, repeatable and trustworthy (Chakrabartty 2013). As I stated earlier, I had no pre-set questions, as questions were generated from the issues that we addressed during our discussion. These questions were repeated at subsequent interviews across the various communities with participants. The corresponding words, phrases and themes across the data collected eliminated any threat to the validity and reliability of the data. Together we validated the findings[181]. Some errors may have occurred in the process, but the quality data analyzed and discussed in the subsequent chapter indicates the extent to which the research finding is fair to the data collected.

With regard to authenticity, I ensured that different viewpoints were recognised. It was a fair representation across the communities irrespective of age, social group or status. The composition of sampling of participants from the different communities across the kingdoms as described earlier was to get their different views about Ogoniland and the issues under investigation. However, it was interesting to discover participant views were basically similar to each other.

Considering that this is a PAR study, the strategies I adopted to ensure credibility are prolonged engagement in the field, reflexive approaches, participant debriefing, triangulation and feedback from participants (Guba 1981; Lincoln & Guba 1985). I stayed for five months uninterruptedly in the research environment, so my familiarity with the research communities helped me with some understanding of the people's way of life and relationships, which I never took for granted. The informal encounters helped me capture the essence of the data from participant's perspectives. But I constantly checked with my gatekeeper about emerging actions and activities.

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[180] See Yin 2014; Guba 1981; Denzin & Giardina 2007.
[181] See reflection boxes in appendix 10.

Encounter with Individual Groups

Encounter with MOSOP

Though every Ogoni professes allegiance to MOSOP, there is a structure (registered body) where leaders are elected to represent the entire society in their struggle for justice. Thus, I was more interested to observe the activities of the formal body, which is a collection of members or representatives across the five kingdoms. My gatekeeper was not an official member but had close relationship with some executive members, whom he worked closely with to get information concerning their meeting schedules. These facilitated our access to their meeting arenas. Since deliberations were in the local language, I looked for meanings in their speech and action (Balsiger & Lambelet 2014), and depended on my gatekeeper's interpretations or explanations afterwards. I visited MOSOP's headquarters in Bori[182] and observed their activities.

During the interviews, participants talked about the current factionalization in MOSOP and the need to focus on the initial agenda, which is MOSOP as the mouthpiece of Ogoni in their struggle for justice. From my observation and the information gathered, I think the sectionalization (kingdoms) of the Ogoni society, which is a reality in all ethnic groups in Nigeria, constitutes a major part of MOSOP's current problems, which are manifest in some examples of power differentiations and clear distinctions of socio-economic status among members.

There were revealing gaps between gender and age lines - very few women were seen at their meetings with little or no participation. Also, in terms of physical appearance, some members looked much better than others. The structure of their meetings were quite hierarchical and few young faces seen at the "high table". In most cases, there was no female at the "high table". However, it was interesting to see some remarkable sense of oneness amidst the voices of divisions that were expressed. One of the most striking things revealed at these meetings was their singing of the Ogoni national anthem at the beginning of their meetings:

Aabo, aabo, pa Ogoni aabo nee iye ge ziga na ko Baraboo a giima i…

Arise, arise, Ogoni people arise; we shall no longer allow the world to outwit us…

Though I heard nothing from their deliberations, this gesture was, for me, a sign of unity and their unanimous decision to challenge their oppressor. It sounded and looked like a united front highlighting its common purpose- justice for the Ogoni. I had this reaction in my field notes:

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[182] Where the famous Ken Saro-Wiwa led match started in 1993.

> … in spite of inconveniences, I am able to catch up with these people [participants]. In all that I heard from the individuals [interviews], there is something interesting that I have discovered observing this people [participants]. There is a common-sense understanding between these people [participants] as they have displayed in their gatherings. No matter how politicised their movement is as shared by members at interviews, they still have a common vision. I am convinced that they know what they are doing. Even with some of the negatives reported by some members, it is clear that they [participants] have the capacity of building their movement. It can be said that their gatherings are real opportunities for them to make their voices heard (Observation note 21/08/2018).

Encounters with Women's Groups

Throughout my time in the field, I took account of all the locations and appearances of the interview sites, and my personal feelings toward the stories told by participants as well as their appearances, especially the women. Reviewing my recorded interviews and journal, I see how these have informed my interpretations. My journal entries show the rapport I established with women participants during our interactions. I was moved by their desire to share their stories and challenges in dealing with cultural restrictions that are also visible in the new social reality. From the stories they told, it was difficult to portray the present Ogoni women as passive and subservient. Though they could not express themselves well among the men, but discussed and protested vehemently against the male patriarchal beliefs. I noted this in my journal:

> I'm so happy to hear these women speak the way they did. I felt like I was seeing the image of my mother in each of them. Each woman said something that touched a part of me and an aspect of my life. Their stories were overwhelmingly encouraging and I feel like we are already friends (Reflective journal 31/05/18).

In one of our interviews, a graduate participant talked about *The Red Bra*, which is the female version of cultism in Ogoni. Although this was highly contested, as majority of men claimed they had not heard about the group, while all ladies who participated confirmed it during the testing of the research findings. This as the lady explained, is a reaction from the young ladies in order to fight the young men's cultist groups, who infringe on their rights at will because of their position as women. The rapport I established with them made me more comfortable but at the same time I realized it was a huge responsibility for me to capture their stories as accurately as possible and to interpret it in a more factual way. As regards my rapport with the women, I have this journal entry:

> …I felt so comfortable talking to the women. Their stories had resonance with my mother's; an African woman who spoke openly about her experience of marginalization since she married my father. I felt like we had met some years before" (31/05/2018).

Their stories resonated with me and I did identify with them.

Although I had a good rapport with the women, one of the participants who offered to give me an interview made me felt uncomfortable. We had arranged for the interview, but when I arrived at the venue with my gatekeeper, I realized the interview was to take place in her little medicine shop. I explained about my research and she accepted that we do the interview in the shop. But I had hardly said two sentences before I was interrupted by her customers who walked in to purchase drugs.

There was no smile on her face and she looked very upset for reasons I cannot tell. I never got her full attention and from her body language, she was not ready for the interview. I suspected my presence was interrupting her business or she thought I would ask her about her personal life; or felt uneasy when she realized that my gatekeeper, who negotiated the meeting, actually brought me to her place. Hence, I called off the interview, and it was as if she had waited for me to do that. Immediately, she promised to let me know when she would be ready for the interview.

On our way back home, I asked my gatekeeper about the reaction and he said that the lady was bereaved and was facing some difficult family issues. I cannot be accurate but I presume the explanation from my gatekeeper justifies the latter suspicion indicated above. I made this journal entry upon reflecting on the experience:

> ... her attitude was so strange, and I felt like a nuisance she wanted to quickly get rid of. I would not call it the worst of my experience, but have to say it was a bitter pill to swallow (Reflective journal 10/05/2018).

Encounter at Bane

The Bane community is the birth place of Ken Saro-Wiwa, and it was a great privilege for me to visit the community. I had an interesting experience from the focus group interviews that took place with some youth and some middle aged/ elderly participants. The youngest was 17 years while the eldest was 82 years old. The youth session which was within the research design had four participants - three male and one female happened after the one with elders, unlike the sessions with elders, which I call "mass interview". I had sixteen participants (men and women), but only thirteen signed the consent form. The three would not sign because they were never convinced with my explanation of the research objectives, yet they accepted and participated.

Also, the middle aged /elders group would not accept the four youths whom I had a separate session with to participate in their group, because as my gatekeeper revealed to me, they came from another compound within the same village. As an African-Nigerian, this is quite understandable because of the distinctive nature of our structure where an ethnic group comprises sections, subsections, right down to family distinction, with internal politics between the different groups that can only be explained by members.

I visited the Bane community during my pilot investigation and have to say that I was left with so much anxiety on both occasions. Those I dealt with were so conceited and spoke angrily about the rest of the Ogoni kingdoms. They felt their community paid the highest price (the killing of Ken Saro-Wiwa) on the Ogoni issue, but the present MOSOP structure does not recognize them. They lamented how MOSOP is controlled by Shell/Government because members (the officials) are paid huge sums of money behind doors for their personal interest. Their support was more for the Ogoni

Central Indigenous Authority (OCIA)[183], which is one of the new structures in Ogoni that seeks justice for the people.

The atmosphere was always tense, making me uncomfortable. On my first visit during pilot investigation, I requested to see Ken Saro-Wiwa's tomb, which is within a little square house (see figure 11) on a large piece of walled-land that looked like a forest.

Photo of Little house hosting Ken Saro-Wiwa's Tomb

Figure 11: Entrance to Ken Saro-Wiwa's tomb

I was permitted by the young man who served as security personnel to go through the gate into the walled-land but denied access to the little room, to see the tomb. I was allowed to use my smart phone to take these pictures. He promised it would be possible for me to see the tomb when I returned for fieldwork since I said to him that I was coming back; it never happened. I reminded

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[183] Dr Goodluck Diigbo, is the President of Ogoni Central Indigenous Authority (OCIA*)*. According to him, "on Aug. 2, 2012, Ogoni people decided to press home a major demand by MOSOP which is 'self-government' within the framework of our country, Nigeria, and based on that demand the Ogoni Central Indigenous Authority (OCIA) was formed." For him, the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) has been abolished, warning the public against impostors. That MOSOP, having achieved its primary objective, has currently been abolished to pave way for an autonomous body that would oversee the implementation of MOSOP's demands. He urged the Ogoni community to disregard any person or group parading as MOSOP as they were only using the platform for selfish gains (See: https://www.pulse.ng/news/local/ogoni-activist-says-mosop-abolished-warns-against-impostors/x4v80nc Accessed 06/0/2019).

him when I got back for fieldwork but it became obvious that he was not interested, so I gave up. To these experiences, I made the following note in my journal:

> …It was really a very strange stressful day. A day full of uncertainty, I have to be honest that the process today was so frustrating. My experience with participants today was indeed a new experience. Some of them didn't even consider it was an interview; they felt it was their usual Sunday meeting so I was just a visitor among them. I was literally at their mercy, and they gave me a hard time and behaved as if they were not willing to do what I wanted. At a point, I felt I wasn't interested in the interview again, but remembered beggars can't be choosers. …. it is an eye opening experience for me as I'm going to be ready for such uncertainties… unfortunately, I think I've had enough. I'm not going to be returning to the village for the sighting of the tomb (Reflective journal 29/04/2018)

The surprise I got during our discussion session with the middle aged /elders group was that they took charge of the entire process and decided the tone of the interview, with one participant acting like their community interpreter; a distinctive practice in some African cultures (for example, the Ashanti in Ghana), mostly in palaces. He almost did not allow anyone to speak due to his acting like the mouthpiece of the people. For anyone who attempted to say something, he interpreted what was said even if it was expressed in English. They spoke their local language, *Khana*, intermittently. I attempted a few times to step in but he (the self-imposed interpreter) interrupted me and continued with his story; mostly unrelated. This alone took about four hours, while the session with the youth was pending. I was confused and full of anxiety since I had no clue where the event was heading, more so, that we would leave the community before nightfall due to security concerns.

My ego deflated and I was so intimidated and emotionally exhausted following that experience. Fortunately, my gatekeeper was allowed to participate, so he explained to me the things murmured (mostly about their grievances against MOSOP) in the local language as soon as the session was over. At the end of the session, there was an outright demand for gratuity from the interpreter on behalf of the people. He claimed it was a tradition and, for fear he would not declare the gift, I presented it before the other participants.

I cannot be accurate on what their intentions were, but my presumption is that the brutal nature of Ken Saro-Wiwa's death played a significant role in what happened. The ongoing feeling of being betrayed by MOSOP, which they see as betraying the Ogoni-Ken Saro-Wiwa's original plan and the feeling that I was from the North and "they (Northerners) killed our son" - a common phrase expressed at the scene. It was also obvious that since they are direct relatives of Ken Saro-Wiwa, their narrative should be the key information. I suspected their thoughts were more on how they will benefit than the general good.

The disruption which PAR can create in participants' working lives is not to be underestimated; feelings of confusion can surface as anger and resentment. Such challenges highlight how learning is never just a cognitive task, but is linked to individual biography and involves participation in

social practices. Feelings and dynamics aroused in group settings are complex where there are multiple layers of relationships. However, I take it that the disruption created can set the agenda for change. But it is important to note that strategies are required to enable participants feel supported and respected, as Savin-Baden and Wimpenny (2007) pointed out, such strategies should include: consideration of the participants' competence.

Developing a sound dialectic within PAR involves using strategies to enable participants to rethink individual knowledge construction in light of complex group dynamics. As with this particular focus group session, the degree of resentment may have surfaced due to their relationship with the other Ogoni kingdoms. I have to say that being with such group and navigating a path through such period of disharmony can be explained though Lave and Wenger's (1991) assertion that learning, thinking and knowing are relations among people in, with and arising from the socially and culturally constructed world. Tuckman (1965) concludes therefore that periods of 'storming' can lead to improved 'performing'; the bonding between participants can be stronger through adversity. Evidently, the PAR inquiry process can be exciting yet upsetting. Participants may express the emotional distress of trying out new actions which do not go as planned.

Encounter with the Youth

My encounter with the youth during the interviews was also fascinating. Majority of those who participated in the research were of my generation who based their stories on what they have read, or were told by their parents or have heard from their peers. But it is important to emphasize that the Ogoni current social reality is shared by every member of the society given that every Ogoni on the street speaks the language of oppression and marginalization.

Just like I did with the women's groups, I identified with the youth by sharing my own story as oppressed, especially when they mentioned some events in their life that was so touching. For instance, when they discussed the vulnerability of their chiefs who have compromised on the Ogoni struggle, I shared in their views by citing a few examples of similar stories about the chiefs in Tivland; how they take sides with the government against the poor people. However, I tried to be brief with my side of the story so it would not influence the stories they shared. The rapport established was incredible and it made them willing to talk about their social reality. It was interesting to see how the youth felt my research topic was good and represented them well. Some were convinced that the research would let the world know about the Ogoni tribulations. One of the participants said this: "we want the whole world to know how we are suffering" (FGPDBA 14/05/18). Their enthusiasm was encouraging.

There was a dimension of risk that emerged in the process; I cannot recall how it started. It was about the killing of the Ogoni four which remains a mystery as regards who carried out the killing.

The government accused the Ogoni youth while majority of Ogonis believed it was a conspiracy by the government to arrest Ken Saro-Wiwa. I became aware of the potential danger at one of the focus groups interviews, where there was a heated debate among participants when one alleged it was the Ogoni themselves who carried out the killings. I explored more about the issue with my gatekeeper who told me that the families and communities where these elders came from are still aggrieved; they accuse other communities of killing their sons. Some would not have anything to do with MOSOP since it was alleged that NYCOP, under the influence of Ken Saro-Wiwa, carried out the killings.

Encounter with the Chiefs

I also conducted interviews with a few chiefs. It was interesting how they scrutinised my gatekeeper before accepting to do the interview. From my enquiry (with my gatekeeper), it was clear that the fear was due to security reasons. Just as in every ethnic group in the country, the traditional leadership structures have been politicised. Our paramount rulers are technically agents of the government, because they are on the government's salary scheme - a position that makes them vulnerable as regards matters of justice between the government and the people. During the discussion with the chiefs, the one element that resonated strongly and surprised me was their description of the pressures exerted on them (chiefs) by both the government and their community members. They explained how they spent their time accepting or turning down interviews with NGOs and researchers. This is due to the type of triangular relationship (chiefs- the people- and the government) they find themselves into.

Reflecting on what they said, I made the following entry in my journal:

> It will be interesting to find out from the government officials what the idea of pressure is. Will this be possible at all? However, from my reflection with other participants so far, it is clear that the chiefs are points of interest for the government because of the social structure of the Ogoni, which gives them so much power with so much control over their subjects. Somehow, I understand their emotional stress. I guess they feel this way because they are suffering from burnout (Reflective journal 22/06/2018).

During our interviews, I was very conscious of their difficult position, so I ensured I remained objective. One of the salient points that emerged from the data is that they constantly referred to their cultural beliefs and values and the hope for a new Ogoni. They emphasized the idea that they have their own culture, but surprisingly, have spent their lives negotiating their identity with the government.

Attempted Encounter with the Cultist Groups

It was frustrating that I was not able to interview some members of the occult (both men and women) groups. Since my gatekeeper declined to engage into this for fear the rival group might see

him as an informant to the other group, I tried through the parish priest to negotiate an interview with one of the male group leaders, but he categorically said he was not interested in granting an interview. Also, during the pilot study, another priest who was facilitating a rehabilitation programme for the cultists, arranged for me to have a focus group interview with some of the members. They accepted and gave us a date and time, but kept us waiting for four hours and none of them showed up even though their leader was on the phone with the priest a number of times to say they were on their way. I tried to follow-up but it never worked out. To the first experience, I made the following journal entry:

> I felt very sad that I was not able to get the young men for the interview, but I have to get used to these attitudes. Obviously, these boys are being watched by their own community members because of their violent activities against innocent people. It may be because most of them are on the government watch list that they are afraid to do an interview. It's like an impossible task to get them for an interview but I hope it works out for me on another day (Reflective journal 19/06/2018).

Conclusion

In this section, I have given a detailed explanation of my research methods that helped in the collection of data to answer my research questions. I justified the research context (marginalised Ogoni society) by explaining the process of data collection. I showed how the PAR research process was useful to the people. The primary purpose which is empowered the people through the process of constructing and using their own knowledge (Reason 1994) as they were able to recognise the value and authenticity of their own local knowledge, know-how, and expertise. The next section takes up a detailed discussion of the research methodology with a reflection on field experience. It discusses the participatory nature of my six months engagement in the field and highlights the methodological complexities encountered during the process.

Section 2- Research Methodology: Reflection on Field Experience
Introduction

The PAR process is cyclical (Zuber-Skerritt & Perry 2002). It is a reflexive process where participants are involved in transforming their social lives through the spiral cycles of critical and self-critical action and reflection (Kemmis & McTaggart 2005); it mitigates the power differentials among those who participate in the process (Fine et al. 2004). PAR is not just about the label, but the political and ethical issues that are involved during the data generation process.

When situations like the Ogoni struggles goes on for a long time, participants' practice is not always fully conscious. So, the self-reflective approach adopted is to help participants and myself understand and improve upon the practice in which we participate, and in the context of the

research objectives- how the oppressive structure has affected their lives as a minority group who are considered the "other" (Said 2017).

This section discusses the participatory nature of my six months' engagement in the field; discerning the impact of oppression by locating it within the complex matrix of praxis. It highlights the methodological complexities and discusses my location and ideological battles; the tensions I grappled with without seeking to be detached and removed from these realities (Baum et al. 2006). Although many authors have continued to raise the dichotomy of the insider-outsider stance, especially on the accompanying merits or demerits[184], it is important to let my reader know that I focus here on the insider and outsider experiences from the point of view that I was not visible (to Ogoni) as someone from an ethnic minority until I mentioned it.

I tried to explain the politics from the micro politics of personal relations to the cultures and resources of research units; the powers relations within the communities and with the government. This is important because apart from revealing the political perils and ethical pitfalls in research process, it conveys the message to those who may think that the research process is smooth and unproblematic. In summary, as a PAR study, it espouses the view that fieldwork is definitely not a soft option, but, rather, represents a demanding craft that involves coping with multiple negotiations and continually dealing with ethical dilemmas (Punch 1986).

Analytical Strategies and Analysis Procedures

As established in chapter 1, the procedures adopted for this research were rooted in the strength of participants and myself. The process engaged participants who were not monolithic in their representation. There was constant negotiation of different voices, and maybe agendas, within every group that met for discussion. The process recognised and addressed the inevitable tensions that arose when trying to create and sustain dialogue within the groups (De Finney & Ball 2015).

The process was quite challenging. How to conceptualise and facilitate issues of access, participation and representation were key issues of concern for me. These relational dilemmas are central to PAR - the "messiness" must not be taken for granted (De Finney & Ball 2015) in the discussions within this research. However, my understanding of the literature guided me through the relational complexities, which I did not take for granted even when I was not supported, especially with time and safe environment. Though there was no safe space and time, meetings were planned and respectfully facilitated; it allowed participants' grievances to be heard and the possible ways to resolving them explored.

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[184] See Dwyer & Buckle 2009; Kerstetter 2012.

One of the critical issues I encountered was building and sustaining open-ended questioning as much as possible; prevent participants from inserting potentially divisive, exploitive and pre-emptive ideological standpoints into the research process; an experience that revealed the state of mind of some participants as being fed up with the current oppressive situation or with the researcher who preoccupies them with questions. The PAR framework offered guidelines for navigating the challenging inner workings of collective knowledge making (Maguire 2001).

The iterative nature of PAR incorporates a multiplicity of processes and contributions which lead to a wide range of possible data, interpretations, and actions (Creswell 2005). It was a critical analysis process that challenged participants to question their social, political, and economic conditions. It helped them challenge normative categories that maintain social inequities as well as prevailing stereotypes and assumptions about normative standards (De Finney & Ball 2015).

Participants moved from exploring their individual circumstances and stories to a critical collective analysis that allowed them to examine the necessary action for change. In line with Hall's (1975) idea, participants developed their own theories and solutions to identify problems - moving them beyond knowledge generation to concrete social transformation and praxis making. Taking on the roles of advocates and activists, participants selected and decided on actions such as training opportunities, workshops, resources for community members or service providers, educational campaigns and political organisation. However, it should be noted that not all of these happened in this research, but just to highlight that these are possible things that do sometimes come out of PAR.

To be able to create and mobilise such strategies requires participants to move beyond their own boundaries and their own communities into public consciousness. Thus, the PAR approach linked participants' micro-experiences and their communities to an evolving macro-analysis that typically involves critical reflection on the socio-political, economic, and historical contexts of social inequity. This was to avoid a homogenising and universalising flatness (De Finney & Ball 2015), also, the relations of power[185] that exist within Ogoni community to provide strategic alternatives for change. The idea was about shaping not only social conditions under investigation, but power dynamics among participants (De Finney & Ball 2015).

My Roles as a Researcher in the PAR process
During the research process, I had different roles and they changed according to what was appropriate in the different stages. I engaged with general and particular roles: a researcher, negotiator in some cases, facilitator, organizer at interviews, educator, development initiator, friend, an advocate/activist. On their part, participants, through the research methods- focus group and individual interview, were to examine and reflect their personal life for a better future. I found

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[185] Intersecting effects from ethnicity, ability, class, gender and age.

myself in the position of a negotiator between the young and old due to their different conception of their social reality and how each would want to narrate it in their own way as well as how different people wish to advocate support in relation to their demand for justice. My reaction to this was noted in my research journal:

> … It's difficult, sometimes, to understand these people [participants]. I do acknowledge that life is difficult for them [participants], but I get frustrated with some of them [participants] who don't even think it takes a lot of energy and time to do this [interview]. … Unfortunately, I'm at their mercy as it is important to listen to all of them [participants]. For now, there's nothing I can do about the situation than to follow up on issue (Reflective journal 01/05/19).

In line with Maguire's (1993) account, I found these varied roles difficult to handle in most cases, but they broadened my understanding of the issues on ground and equipped me with good experience about dynamics of research. What stood out for me was that despite the disagreements in terms of ideas, there was consensus at the end of each session - the recognition of the one agenda, which is 'justice for the Ogoni people'. As Tam-George (2010) rightly argued, it is "…a holistic communal narrative consolidated by horizontal alliances rooted in the common Ogoni folk community itself".

An Episode of Tragedy

It is believed that keeping a journal during a research period helps the researcher in developing a deeper understanding of self, and to be able to document personal growth that leads to self-understanding (Glaze 2001). In my case, I kept a journal which recorded my entire journey throughout the research. It was successful but full of frustrations, leading to an episode of tragedy. Although this was not due to the study but necessary to note as I encountered it during the research period.

As soon as I arrived in Nigeria for the fieldwork, my mother became very ill. She went through agony for the five-month period I was out in the field. This was a period of distress for my family and me, but I tried to be strong all through the period of my research. Though I had to keep in touch with my niece and sometimes the doctors at the hospital, I remained focussed on my research. I literally suppressed my feelings and spent all my free time on my research since I was not sure what the next minute in Ogoni would be due to the fragile environment. I successfully completed my research, and barely one week following my return to Ireland, tragedy struck as my mother died, and I had to return to Nigeria for her funeral.

Within the space of two years, I lost my Elder Sister and Mother. Though I felt I needed time to rebalance my life, I decided to take very little time to grieve the loss. My greatest fear had been that my grief would make me lose my focus and I opted to internalise the sadness and bury myself in my research work. I must say that the sense of sadness in my life was overwhelming, but I felt it was

important to complete my studies. However, the emotional trauma from the tragedies and challenges in my priestly life became too much to bear, so I had to undergo some sessions of counselling which were extremely useful.

Researcher's Experiences, Personal Motives and Assumptions

Experience of PAR in the Field

The PAR reflexive approach allowed me to bring my own philosophy, experience and understanding to the research process. Obviously, I wondered about my interest in working with the Ogoni people, and about my background and how it will contribute to the research (Kirby et al. 2006). Even though my engagement with the marginalized Ogoni people confirmed my reason for why I decided to adopt the PAR methodology, one of my assumptions going into the research was that the people are so disempowered and would not have the confidence to participate as I expected. It was interesting, however, to see the ordinary Ogoni people acting as researchers by exploring questions about their daily lives, their resources and trying to generate knowledge that will facilitate their taking action to overcome the inequalities they experience.

The experience, for me, affirmed Gramsci's (1971) notion of "the intellectual", who according to him are people who have a full-time role (usually but not always paid) organizing people's activities and articulating ideas. In essence, this is not about philosophers, novelists and so on, but people (e.g. artists, priests, managers, doctors etc.) with a body of technical knowledge and who structure what other people do.

For organic intellectuals, these is a contrasting category, which is that those created recently from a particular social class - for example, managers in industry are created by the capitalist class, while some kind of activists (e.g. trade unionists) are created by the working class. So, the idea is that while Gramsci would agree that everyone is in a certain sense an intellectual, only some Ogoni are intellectuals, primarily those with leadership roles in MOSOP (it could also be the traditional chiefs). Though it is not so clear how Gramsci would classify MOSOP cadres, but given that it is a relatively new social movement, it would be fair to consider them as organic intellectuals.

As no research is neutral since researchers influence their inquiries by their ideologies and biases (Kanesick 1994), I did not enter Ogoniland as a *tabula rasa*. I had some information about the place and people and this was evident in the decisions I made in relation to my dealing with participants; about locations, the kind of questions I asked, the way I went about the research methods, my interpretations of events and the way the findings are reported here. The PAR process was quite instructive especially in relation to my topic and research questions as well as the interest of

participants in relation to their empowerment and socio-economic and political change. As such, I noted the following in my research journal:

> … I spent a long time with them [participants] before ever the tape goes on. It was not easy to explain things to them [participants] but interesting how they asked questions concerning so many issues that are relevant to the research. I am not so sure what they think in their minds but I be [had to be] careful not to discourage them when they are asking hard questions, since their interest is to know why I am asking them to tell me about their situation. I have to say that it is not an easy job at all but the reaction so far is promising and it will benefit me if I am able to sustain the tempo (Reflective journal 11/05/2018).

The revelation here is that challenges are inevitable and points of tensions that cause discomfort are to be expected. I was confronted with the idea that people whose daily lives are taken over by struggle for survival will react in the way I witnessed. Their interest in asking questions about my interest in studying their situation and expectations of what follows, informed me about being conscious and cautious of the stigma attached to research with marginalized people. In this case, participants, I presumed, expressed the feeling that they are being excessively researched. Here is what I noted in my research journal:

> ...the reality of the situation here is getting me confused. The first dilemma for me is that I am struggling with the conflicts in my role as a researcher, animator and listener, and my ability to communicate the right message to these people [participants] that will meet their expectations. My ability to show solidarity to their situation and make them interested in the research and how I will be able to assess the different ideas that are not, in fact, clear-cut and easily observable. I am aware now that I can't be seen to negate any opinion. What is important for me to do from the point of view of clarity between us [participants and myself] is to be clear about my values and assumptions. To be aware of the differences that exists between us. It is important to watch out about our roles as we move along. I have to watch out on how our feelings and opinions will fall in line with the topic under investigation (Reflective journal 30/04/18).

However, the PAR methodological approach created greater equality in my relationship with participants. Respecting our assumptions, motives and values by allowing mutual contribution kept us all on equal footing. I must therefore say that this experience helped clarify the content and approach of my research. I must say, also, that the pedagogical approach provoked critical thinking of participants with regards to their current social reality.

Researcher's Motives
My motives for engaging with this research differed from what my participants expected from their participation. However, we made our positions clear to each other and from my evaluation, trust was built, and there was clarity as regards our relationship. Although I arrived in the field with my motives, which was about having access to data for my research, the indisputable sense of diversity encountered served to enrich our knowledge (Kirby et al. 2006).

The idea of giving priority to grassroots activities for the purpose of social change and justice was informed by what I witnessed personally as a member of a minority group. I had no idea how I was going to address these social issues, until I engaged in an MA degree programme in International

Development, which gave me a good sense of direction. Though I had just a vague idea of what I opted for in this research, I was convinced it would be a weighty responsibility. The following reflection in my pre-research journal reflects my initial thoughts:

> I have already conducted interviews before and I felt so comfortable, but it will be a joke if I say I am not nervous with the whole idea of qualitative research. My proposal makes sense to me, but the more I read around qualitative research, the more new ideas spring up and get [leave] me confused. It worries me if my original idea in the proposal will still be practically appropriate when I eventually begin the study. I'm not sure this will be a quick process as I imagined (Reflective journal 10/06/17).

Researcher's Assumptions

For Bradley (2011) assumptions are mostly taken for granted, or presumed to be true, and this is mostly based on ideologies, values and experiences of people. A classic example is my initial belief about the Ogonis as cannibals. As Smith (1995) opined, our assumptions, though often in an invisible role, influence our communication and behaviour. This was true in my case before commencing this research, and the following were some of my core assumptions, which for the sake of transparency, I shared with some participants:

a. That the Ogonis are aggressive people and had innate capacity for violence.

b. That due to their experience, participants would view my presence like that of an oppressor.

c. That participants might not have the knowledge for a critical reflection.

d. That my participants and I might not be able to create the necessary space for interaction.

e. That my participants were oppressed people and should be provided with tools and opportunities that will allow them benefit from the research.

I must admit that it was difficult navigating through these challenges, but my engagement with the research which was a learning experience, created the space for my understanding of participants' context in greater detail. Their verbal and nonverbal promptings and the impact of my presence contributed to my knowledge of the participants. The relationship we established helped me in addressing the assumptions outlined above. However, I wondered about the idea of intrusion, and how I would guide the process to reflect participants' interests and interpretations more than my own. Obviously, this was not about becoming an Ogoni but respecting the differences between our cultures and at the same time being part of their culture through participating in their daily activities. In relation to this, I thought about the risks that might be involved in entering another person's culture. I made this journal entry upon reflecting on these issues:

> I can imagine that the life stories of these people [participants] will be difficult to understand. I really wish that there would be some connection between us to make me feel comfortable. This will be something practical and will benefit them [participants] too. Their participation in the research will definitely provide some answers to their problems. If I can work around my fears and imagined risks, this

research, as it is, will help them to understand better their situation and how to make changes and improvements (Reflective journal 22/07/17).

The Stigma around Research

One of the most interesting experiences, and what I will consider an area of tension for me throughout the research, was the stigma around research held by almost all participants. Even those who had no personal experience with other researchers nor were involved in any research, believed that Ogoniland is a fertile environment for researchers and that the Ogoni people had been overly researched by other people with no immediate benefit to the Ogonis. Participants made allusions to how NGOs, Churches and politicians have used their situation for personal interests. Participants complained about lack of needs assessment by NGOs and government officials who access Ogoniland for their own gain. These feelings confirmed my gatekeeper's presumption about my first contact who abandoned me on arrival in Ogoni. It became very clear to me about the idea of using money to access information from the Ogoni people for other purposes, or some people among them created information for the sake of money.

These realities made it difficult for participants to view my research as something for their benefit. On my part, I worried about how they might interpret my stories and relate them to their lived experiences. I was so much afraid when I was confronted with this reality and this was what I recorded in my journal:

> … [I] found myself among professionals today. It is obvious that these people [participants] are well informed more than myself. Their comments are genuine and I've the feeling that nothing is going to change their minds. I'm really afraid of what will happen as we move on… (Reflective journal 11/05/18).

However, my transparency and the level of their engagement, I believe, changed their perception. It was evident that my approach did not look exploitative. It emphasized their empowerment, which was different from what they had experienced. Though the existing stigma was not completely gotten rid of, as I had to always explain same things over and over again, the relationship that existed between us, gave them some confidence.

Positionality

The nature of qualitative research is such that the researcher's beliefs, political stance and cultural backgrounds are important variables that affect the research process (Bourke 2014). Participants' experiences are framed in socio-cultural contexts such that in carrying out a research, the researcher must establish trust with participants in order to arrive at valid results. Hall's (1990) position as regards the researcher's position, as discussed earlier, is a key factor in research process. Thus, positionality became the space where my objective and subjective feelings and experiences meet (Bourke 2014), and as Freire (2000) suggests, the two exists in a "dialectic relationship". It means

that it was impossible for me to achieve objectivism without reference to subjectivism. So, I did my best to remain objective but at the same time mindful of my subjectivities.

Nigeria is a multicultural society and individuals are socialized within their ethnic and cultural communities. Even though people tend to gravitate towards those with whom they share some level of commonality (Chang 2002), there are others who share knowledge that differ in significant ways from the other individuals who socialized outside their culture. Banks (1998)[186] calls this an external-outsider, and I find my position within this description. My social orientation was different from my participants, but I was able to interpret and mediate the complex interactions that took place with my gender, social class, age and religious affiliation playing significant roles during the research process.

My position was checked constantly by participants. For example, participants turned to me constantly during interviews and asked, "What do you think about us?" "Why did you decide to come to Ogoni to do the research when you also have troubles in your state?" I can not be certain on what they had in mind for asking such questions, but apart from the known Shell/Government-caused crisis in Ogoniland, there are a number of stereotypical issues that might have caused their curiosity. Nevertheless, it did not constitute a major barrier to the democratic PAR process.

Apart from the above explanation, it is for me one of the propaganda stories created by the crisis situation in Ogoniland. Also, it could be about my identity as a priest and also as someone from outside their culture. Interestingly, identity politics has been one of the major causes of division and crisis in the country, which has left the Ogonis at the margins of the Nigerian society. I assume they were conscious of their position as second-class citizens in the country, and constantly testing to know where I stand between the Ogonis and Shell/Government. To this effect, one young participant said this:

> … the Ogoni people are not violent people. We are peaceful people as we talk about it in the beginning. People think we are violent but only government know why all these things are happening here [in Ogoni]. We are normal people and we respect ourselves. The youth are doing all these crises because they don't have anything to do, and we know what to do to make them not do it. The government thinks it can confuse us, but we will never give up until we get our freedom… (FGAAGP 30/06/18).

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[186]Banks proposed a typology based on the assumption that in a diverse pluralistic society, individuals are socialized within ethnic, racial, and cultural communities' and share knowledge that can differ in significant ways from those individual socialized within other microcultures. He proposes four positions: *indigenous-insider-* one who endorses the unique values, perspectives, behaviours, beliefs, and knowledge of his or her indigenous community and who can speak with authority about it; *indigenous-outsider-* someone who experienced high level of cultural assimilation into an outsider or oppositional culture but remains connected with his or her indigenous community; *externa-insider-* this rejects much of his or her indigenous community and endorses those of another culture and become an adopted insider; *external- outsider-* one who socialized within a community different from the one in which he or she is doing research (Banks 1998).

The above expression represents the feeling of almost all participants. As I was conscious of this fact, I remained resolute about generating knowledge that can help bring change.

Our interactions were based on our lived experiences since I was also from a marginalized minority ethnic group. Like the Ogonis, the management of resources and participation in the political affairs of the country by other minority ethnic groups is very minimal or simply nonexistent. The three ethnic blocs control the economy and can breach the security of the minority groups at will. From this shared experience, it was easy for me to convince participants that the Ogoni struggle is a template for all who seek meaning about their socio-political identity in the Nigerian society. The majority were surprised that (as a priest) I was also talking about social injustice. Obviously, my readiness to talk about it was reassuring. It brought then the awareness that there are other ethnic groups in the country who share the same fate.

One of the most interesting things is that the experience provided me with a very real and personal connection with the people in their social world. In relation to our interaction above, I had this reflection in my journal:

> Today's experience was quite challenging for me. I found it difficult to understand the direction they were going with the discussions. Would it be that they are disappointed with my approach or was it just to make sure that I am not spying on them or something like that? I can't establish what they are thinking in their mind, so I've to be focused. But I think the identity issue is really an issue for them and I should try to build my skills and try to get some good information as to why they are so concerned about that… (Reflective journal 14/05/18).

As I reflected and listened to the emergent themes during my analysis of the data, it was clear that my positions and interest influenced their narrative in some instances. For Deutsch (2004) and Ali (2015) this should be seen as a process of achievement. But it is important to know that the insider possesses an intimate knowledge that offers insights that are at times difficult or impossible to access by an outsider. However, the realities that characterizes the Ogoni present society are shared across the nation, and "the values of shared experience, greater access, cultural interpretation, and deeper understanding and clarity of thought, are closely tied together and inform one another in a variety of ways" (Alzbouebi 2004).

Issues of Power among Researcher and Participants
There is bound to be inequality in all phases of social life including research activities (Merriam et al. 2001). In this case, it is about power relationship between the researcher and participants. Galtung's (1968) idea of "scientific colonialism" gives a much clearer explanation which he talks about the researcher's unlimited access to data of any kind just as the colonial power felt it had the right over products of commercial value in the territories it occupied. For Sanjeck (1993), the researcher holds all the power while the participants are colonized and oppressed. However, power in this context is something to be negotiated not assumed, (Merriam et al. 2001) since social

movement participants in a PAR process have more power than others[187]. In fact, the democratic process creates a good space for the construction of knowledge for social change.

As I stated already, my gatekeeper who negotiated access with potential participants, even though he was a local and knew his way around, constantly used my position as a priest to gain access to participants. As I was curious to know what he told participants, I eavesdropped on his phone conversation with potential participants. I intervened at several points when it was obvious that participants were not comfortable with his (gatekeeper) insistence on dates and times for interviews. I insisted on the idea that we were not exploiters but rather friends and needed to act as equal partners with a common purpose - joining forces to be advocates of justice (Glesne & Peshkin 1992). His emphasis on the fact that the person doing the research was a priest proved he was using my position in the negotiation process; thus it was difficult for anyone to turn down his request.

At participants' discretion, interviews were conducted at participants' homes, Church premises, business shops, and offices in the case of Port Harcourt. It was the case that some participants[188] who were older and had more experience dominated the discussions than the younger ones. This power dynamic could be explained within the African cultural context- the ideas of seniority, gender, social status. On my part, I made no reference to my priesthood and educational background in our discussions and emphasized before each interview that I was there to carry out the research with them not as a priest but as someone who is also from a marginalized minority ethnic in the country, and would want to learn about their struggle. Participants expressed disbelief, both verbally and non-verbally, because it was unusual to have a priest to say he was an activist[189].

One of the values of qualitative PAR study is to challenge the traditional power relation between those who do the research and the people being researched. But the realities and dynamics of the Ogoni social struggle, as the context of this research, affects the quality of the research and the participation of participants, as subject of the research. It is accurate to say that the Ogoni participants were bounded by roles and rules of the research. Some argued how they have essentially become objects who must be controlled by researchers. But it is right to say on the other hand, that majority of the participants felt they are striving to take responsibility for their lives, to become active and responsible.

As the research evolved, some of us (participants and myself) felt more constraints. As the researcher, I took charge of the entire process and knew about the area in relation to participants' involvement but we all had less knowledge of the whole. What was my role and how it differed from the "insiders"? This had to do with the idea of inside and out; the practical nature of feeling of

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[187] See Polletta & Jasper 2001
[188] Especially at focus group interviews.
[189] Majority in Nigeria believe activism amounts to revolution so a priest cannot be an activist.

being cut-off and limited. At a point, I was just bogged with these series of plaguing questions: Was it just my imagination that I am stepping over the boundaries? Whose boundaries? Who has the power? What I eventually did about these power issues as the research moved on was to create and animate a process with participants to check these.

As I returned to the field for the feedback process, I articulated some of these questions and concerns. I brought with me the transcripts of focus group and individual interviews, so that participants will read through them if in doubt. This provoked a conversation on how to increase participants' access to the data without compromising the confidentiality and privacy of others involved. These discussions sought practical solutions, as we became aware of the dimensionality of time and space, shaping the contours of our collective efforts. This particular process of analysis dismissed any distinctions between us (e.g. insiders and outsiders) to allow the dimensions of our experiences to emerge.

As we deliberated further about the data, participants cautioned against using a highly politicised phrase like "the bad boys"[190] for fear that we would alienate some Ogoni since every Ogoni must be seen as part of the struggle for justice. As one young participant argued,

> we are not different [which denotes Ogoni unity]; even though most of us feel that some of our people are responsible for what is going on now in Ogoni, we truly do feel it is not normal [means there is an external force] (FGSKP 12/08/19).

This, for me, was feeling of being responsible for addressing the legitimacy of their struggle in a critical voice.

Presentation

One thing that is true about a good researcher is that he or she struggles to represent the truth about their findings by allowing the voice of their participants to be heard. Drawing from the interpretive idea earlier established, reality was discovered through participants' views, their background and experiences[191]. It shows from the descriptions and interpretations presented how I struggled with understanding the Ogoni structure, cultural values and way of life, and how I also struggled to accurately present participants' perspectives.

For the sake of good interpretation, presentation and accountability, especially to my participants and the entire Ogoni people, there was need to maintain an informed reflexive consciousness in the research process. And since research is not a value-free exercise (Yilmaz 2013), the challenge is not to eliminate but document the effects of my personality that influenced my position in the research. So far, I have been able to show my place in the Ogoni setting, my position in the research process and my relationship with participants. However, it is important to outline the challenges involved:

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[190] Used by some participants to referred to the cultists.
[191] See Mackenzie & Knipe 2006; Yanow & Schwartz-Shea 2012.

the stress from the distances I covered for interviews; witness to tensions within a community or between two communities - violent and reprisal attacks between the communities. However, acting as a *provocateur* within the context of the PAR cycles, there was need to charge participants to think more deeply about their current social reality from a wider perspective; the relationship among themselves and with other minority ethnic groups within the state.

Methodological Complexities

A number of methodological complexities arose in carrying out this research. One of the major issues I grappled with was the PAR process - specifically on how to go through the process without causing any harm to the research participants who were members of MOSOP, and targets of the Federal government. Also, combining the academic requirement and the benefit for the research participants was an issue. There was the challenge of finding an appropriate approach to systematically analyze such broad and different data I generated.

Although I am trained as a missionary priest and worked with marginalized people in different societies, I have to acknowledge that the approach is totally different. Apart from being inspired by theology, the hierarchical relationship that exists between the priest and the people disagrees with PAR principles, which as I discussed above addresses issues of openness and trust.

Finding Common Ground

At the outset of my doctoral candidature, I was convinced about my research context, which captured my personal feelings about my minority position in the country. I was not sure about the methodology and methods for this kind of research since, my prior degree took a quantitative approach. My initial contact with my supervisor addressed my anxiety. Having gone through the literature he recommended, PAR emerged, for me, as a way of working towards culturally sensitive and locally relevant action as described in chapter 1. Also, that it shares some similarities with liberation theology- preferential option for the poor and vulnerable.[192]

As Byrne-Armstrong et al. (2001: vii) remarked, research degrees are "complex, often chaotic [and] sometimes messy", and the demands experienced are shared across disciplinary boundaries and chosen methodologies, but at the same time and among other attributes, the experiences are

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[192] Influenced by the Latin American liberation theology (Gutierrez 1973) alluded to in chapter 2, the Latin American bishops established the idea of "preferential option for the poor" at a conference in Medellin, Colombia, in 1968. This was to fight poverty, inequality, corruption, political instability and illiteracy, among other social ills that were rampant. As a result, the church became a training ground for active Catholics throughout the region. Although some were involved with leftist movements that fought rightist governments in the 1970s and 1980s, more and more Catholics have gained political clout at the ballot box. This approach has since been adopted by the African Church where the vast majority of Africans lived in dehumanizing poverty. The Latin American experience has so much influenced our (Africans) approach to mission as indigenous people- working to empower the poor to help themselves.

fractured along lines of gender and ethnicity (Leonard 2001; Davidson & Foster-Johnson 2001). It suffices therefore, that PhD experience is characterized by both commonality and difference. This became much clearer to me when I entered the field and discovered that attempting PAR was putting myself before many trials (Maguire in Herr & Anderson 2005; Zuber-Skerritt & Perry 2002; Moore 2004; McCormack 2004). Klocker (2011:152) calls it "paradigmatic battle."

Dealing with PAR Literature

When I engaged with PAR literature at the initial stage, I became frustrated with the judgemental and even proselytising criticisms I came across. According to Stoecker (1999) and Moore (2004) the very involvement of academics in PAR institutionalizes, undermines and corrupts the methodology. Others describe it as a "process of vulgarization" (de Toma 1996:4), "tokenistic" (Mayo 2001:279), "deceptive" (Driskell 2002:41), "manipulative" (Hart 1995:24) and "sterile and unsatisfactory" (Cairns 2001:357). On the other hand, Reason and Rowan (1981); Chambers (1997) and Zuber-Skerritt and Perry (2002) argue that influential segments of the PAR literature have also been highly critical of traditional research. This has effectively created a binary of morally good research (e.g. 'authentic' PAR) and morally bad research (e.g. conventional research and 'inauthentic' PAR). As a result, I was afraid of slipping back into the supposedly exploitative realm of traditional research practice because it was difficult for me to reconcile those literatures with my own initial understanding of PAR.

Obviously, the choice of PAR methodology created a lot of anxiety, and I agree with Klocker (2011) that reading research projects such as de Roux' (1991:51) which claimed to have "re-created civil society and broadened grassroots democracy" is quite disturbing. Or, the call (for comrades) to join the 'revolution' and to take part (through PAR) in the "enlightenment and awakening of common peoples" (Fals Borda & Rahman 1991: vii) made me wonder about my research capacity and my contribution to PAR, whose ultimate and ambitious objective is to "[liberate] the human body, mind and spirit in the search for a better, freer world" (Reason & Bradbury 2006:2).

Nevertheless, literature on PAR is not rigid, hence, the need for researchers to be more open to other approaches outside their expertise. As Kesby et al. (2005:145) argued, it is important to avoid being 'puritanical' about the need to do participation "deeply or not at all" since "the road to 'doing research differently' has to begin somewhere". Herr and Anderson (2005:127-128) observed that there will not always be a "'successful' change effort to document with a happy ending". Honestly, these latest arguments have encouraged me to "err on the side of action" rather than the inaction of "waiting and wanting" to do PAR perfectly (Maguire 1987:127). Of course, scholars such as

Maguire (1987:162) and Pain (2004:658) have done well to address my frustration, looking at "sometimes pretentious rhetoric" and "the reality of participatory practice versus its sometimes glossy (or glossed-over) presentation". Both emphasised the importance of celebrating an attempt at achieving meaningful and appropriate social change, irrespective of flaws (Maguire 1993).

PAR on Conflicting Schedules

According to Hart (1992), participatory projects should ideally be initiated by members of marginalized groups, but at the same time this idea of participation, however, is difficult to attain (Maguire 1993; Moore 2004). As PAR literature suggests, key milestones in a PhD process may compromise 'authentic' participation as one must develop a proposal and ethics application early in their candidature (Maguire 1993; Moore 2004). The reality for Gibbon (2002:555) is that the aforementioned documents set out a "defined process for how the research will take place". Nonetheless, participatory researchers are not supposed to pre-empt how research will unfold, since by taking control of the research upfront, one may "jeopardise the defining partnership of PAR" (Burgess 2006:420). On the other hand, delaying these milestones until community consultation has occurred could impede on-time completion (Moore 2004).

Undoubtedly, the above chronology troubled me at the early stages of my research. In the midst of the dilemmas and at the same time aware of my limited time and funding, with advice from my supervisor, I took the decision to build my research proposal and ethical application. Eventually, I discovered that this process did not jeopardise my PAR intentions for two reasons, discussed below.

First, whether I involved participants or not, the PAR approach allows one to build uncertainty into his or her research proposal and ethics applications and as Herr and Anderson (2005) argued, research in the social sciences is rarely predictable and often 'emergent' in design. From this point of view, my research proposal and ethics application explained my chosen methodology and the research questions, which defined the directions of the research. I explained why some uncertainty was necessary, and how it is entirely appropriate to change my research questions and directions once in the field. Also, the university research ethics board was open to receiving updated submissions in light of unexpected twists and turns. This flexibility provided the ground for dialogue with the research community in true participatory style.

Secondly, it was necessary to question the assumption that participatory projects with communities are always ideal. I could have spent years talking with members of the Ogoni communities without them suggesting we conduct research on their lives. According to Maguire (1987), most non-researchers do not conceptualize the world in terms of research, nor are individuals engaged in the task of daily survival likely to consider research a priority. Marginalised individuals are rarely found in 'ready-made groups', making them even less likely to initiate research. They are also likely

to lack the resources required to initiate an inquiry (Nespor 1998). As a summary, Maguire (1987) contends that community-initiated projects are rare, and that, it is perfectly acceptable for academic researchers to initiate participatory endeavours. Her argument defines my position as regards the decision I made to initiate the research without participants.

PAR Timeframes

According to Herr and Anderson (2005: xv), it is difficult to conceptualise PAR as a "linear product with a finite ending". PAR is a time intensive activity[193] and there is no way to avoid some of the processes such as relationship building (Maguire 1993:176). Thus, researchers who engage PAR must see their projects through to their action stage to avoid disappointing participants (Herr & Anderson 2005). This is particularly an issue of concern in some cases. For example, the funding that I received (from my religious order - Holy Ghost Fathers and Brothers) for this research conditioned it within the period of four years as it is the norm for structured PhD programmes in Ireland. This, in itself, constituted a fundamental problem for the research since PAR is time-consuming, and with the limited time, the spiral process could not unfold.

It is important to also emphasise that although PAR may involve a great deal of time investment, it can yield good result in terms of time saved later on. As argued by Isenberg et al. (2004:125) it is important to acknowledge that "collaboration is easier than non-collaboration in many cases". For example, the time-saving potential of PAR has scarcely been acknowledged in the literature, but was most apparent to me at the data collection phase of my research. It was possible for me to interview a large number of people in a short timeframe because I was part of it. Certainly, the approach was not to exploit participants as strategies for avoiding this were negotiated.

Although this was a major concern, as I progress through the research process and from the interactions with my supervisor and colleagues in the department, I learned that it is possible to write a thesis without a neat ending; especially with the PAR process. As a result, I noted the factors beyond my control, and concentrated on my continued engagement in the action process beyond thesis submission.

PAR Ethical Dilemmas

Ethical dilemmas exist in both conventional and PAR studies, but the reality is that the ethical premises driving PAR are often in conflict with institutional or social norms of ethical research in ways that more conventional research encounters may not (Pain 2009; Stoecker 2008). As Manzo and Brightbill (2007) claimed, PAR goes beyond the conventional ethical dictate of "do no harm" (Hugman et al. 2011) by insisting that researchers have a duty to bring about positive change. Clearly, PAR moves away from the one-size-fits all "restrictive, inflexible and top-down" (Cahill et

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[193] See Moss 2009; Maguire 1993; Cameron 2007.

al. 2007:307) institutional ethics to a participatory ethics that involves negotiation with participants (Elwood 2007).

I was a little bit worried that the ethics board of my university would have a problem allowing me to do a PAR in Ogoni, because of the critical nature of the environment and the vulnerable situation of the people. I had the privilege to defend my ethics application when I appeared before the ethics committee panel with my supervisor. I explained how my proposal is focused on a participatory ethics which insists that it is unethical to conduct research on people's lives without engaging them (Jones 2001). I explained why engaging the people would be crucial, and obtained an approval from the committee. Nevertheless, the approval did not resolve the ethical dilemmas in the field. I learned a great deal about ethical issues throughout the PAR process, and I will not pretend that the learning curve was high as real people's lives were involved (Kindon & Elwood 2009).

As clearly established, it was my first time to engage in a rigorous qualitative PAR study with vulnerable people. I had no idea of what constituted an abuse or what the Ogonis considered as taboos, since these are necessary things to watch in almost every culture in Nigeria. Like I mentioned earlier, my host priest and gatekeepers advised me constantly on some of the "dos" and "don't" in Ogoni. For example, the priest alerted me about Ogonis' love for periwinkle, and would not be happy if I say anything derogatory about it. This came up when he saw my reaction against it[194] on the very first day I arrived. I was conscious[195] not to make reference to things I was not sure about, which might offend participants.

Throughout the period of research, I allowed participants to frame their responses within their own world of experiences. At every given encounter, I used the "icebreaker" approach to create an informal setting. I made sure they got involved in the design and delivery of research projects by expressing themselves as they deemed fit. My focus was on making sure that participants understood the validity of the research questions, as they, at the same time, focus on their positionality as they try to construct reality from their perspectives.

Democratization- Generation of Knowledge for Action

Participation- Building Knowledge from Research Method
It is evident from the preceding analysis that knowledge for this research was created and understood, through participants' 'thought-worlds' or unique interpretative repertoires (Potter & Wetherell 1987). The PAR approach encouraged participants' practical knowledge (knowledge from below), their individual skills, competencies and their ability to face and solve the issues they

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[194] While at the dining table because the meals prepared had periwinkle in it.
[195] For the sake of cultural relativity see Renteln 1988; Park 2011, 2014.

faced. It is important to note the knowledge development was at a local level, where participants discussed their relationship with the Nigerian government - which supports the multinational companies, including Shell - the effect of oil activity in Ogoni, which, as they argued, is the cause of poverty and exploitation. As activists, participants highlighted new ways of engaging in the process of change.

Apparently, this falls within the social movement aspect of the research, and the PAR framework adopted is important for studying social movement (Kemmis & McTaggart 2003; Hall & Turray 2006). However, the way the approach is framed, ultimately, has deep implications on the nature of the collaboration: whether, for instance, it replicates extractive forms of research that mine movements for data, or parallels and reinforces movement processes and deepens movement reflections, leading to what Foley (1999:143) describes as a "complex... basis for future strategies". The most important thing as regards the process of framing and constituting PAR is the research design process. As Kane (2001) and Choudry and Kapoor (2009) note, it is the way research relationships are formed and embedded in movement-articulations that determine whether the research is positioned to be a synergistic addition to movement processes- a moving with movements or an extractive process for academic purposes.

Participants described their feelings and their inability to cope with the current awkward (the oppressive structure and environmental degradation) situation. This was prioritized, and together we discussed how to engage with the process of reflection. Based on my perception, interest, ability and the nature of Ogoni environment that was less friendly in terms of allowing for any prolonged back and forth process, I developed a strategy to facilitate the process within the limited time of the interviews. I gave brief training sessions where I explained how the process of learning will happen. Though the participatory training (Hope & Timmel 1984), was stressful and time consuming, it allowed participants active position which also allowed them to engage with the subject under discussion. Their reaction was positive and I was convinced that they were satisfied with the actions. One of the participants remarked:

> Me, personally, I don't know about your intention or what you want to do with our situation, but you're supposed to be aware that we [Ogoni] have been treated badly by so many people [Shell/Nigeria and NGOs]. So many people come here and tell us to do this, and do that, so that our situation will be better, but till today, we can't see anybody that will help us in this situation. But I can say that your way of doing things is different. This way [the PAR process] has given me good understanding of so many things that I did know before. I like this style… (FGPAAY 02/06/2018)

Another participant supported this:

> Like my brother said, nobody care [cares] to help us. We have everything, we have oil and this is giving the country money but look at our situation now. This one will come and say this, another day another person will come and say another thing. Honestly, we are tired of all these plenty idea[s]. But like he said, your own way is ok, and I have to tell you that I am happy with the way we are all talking about it. Like,

today is the first time I am hearing some things here. And I know that if we put our heads together we can do something. Even our youth, there is nobody to handle them well that is why they are doing all the bad, bad things. One thing I must add is that if you can help us with the situation (FGPWVY 02/06/2018).

It established a sense of shared responsibility among participants. Some participants got involved in a number of interviews. In the case of the focus group interviews, some knew each other well before the study, but not until they came together, none of them knew who was taking part in the interviews. Hearing about each other's beliefs and motivations, they appreciated the experience of collective responsibility.

Participants' Construction of Identity
During the research process, I experienced how young Ogonis expressed themselves through the lens of a singular identity such as "Ogoni people," and Nigeria was portrayed as the villain, which was their way of resisting oppression. This characterization sheds light on the complexity and inextricability of the dimension as regards participants thinking around their situation.

Coming from a minority group, I was not surprised by these reactions. Participants were very clear in talking about the Ogoni society as one with a single identity, but my encounters revealed a more complicated picture where members from some of the kingdoms (mostly from Eleme) emphasized their kingdoms as explained earlier.

It is important also to reveal that some members aligned with the nation (Nigeria), which could be about moving with the dominant political class that seeks personal favour from the government. This set them apart from members of the other kingdoms or the entire structure that stands against the government oppressive structure. This example highlights the constructions of identities without recognition of intersecting elements, which as reported in the findings chapter, exposes tension between members; it also exposes the internal division within the Ogoni movement.

PAR - "me" or "us"?
For a PAR study, it is necessary to reconcile the ideas of individualism and collectivism. To attain a PhD degree (especially through a conventionally solitary approach), one must produce a piece of work demonstrating individual research competence. As Herr and Anderson (2005) summarised, co-authorship is unacceptable. On the other hand, PAR is a collaborative process based on dialogue and negotiation (McCormack 2004). It is good to state, however, that researchers who engage the PAR approach somehow reinforce unequal power relationships because they are solely responsible for the task of putting collaborative research to paper (Herr & Anderson 2005). Also, it is important to note that there are concerns over the rightful ownership of knowledge, since it takes the effort of both researchers and participants to arrive at a defined knowledge. For this research, I can say that elements of individualism and collectivism were apparent. I developed the research aims, designed

data collection methods before I engaged my gatekeeper who participated in recruiting participants involved in the process of data collection.

To reconcile the independent and collaborative components of the research, I conceptualized two separate, but overlapping, bodies of work. First, a deliberate balance was struck in the sense that I shared the research information with participants who acknowledged their collaboration (captured in the use of personal pronouns throughout the thesis- see McNiff & Whitehead 2009); my use of "our" research, rather than "my" research is also a powerful statement in the research. Secondly, the production of the thesis for which I alone am accountable to my university (Zuber-Skerritt & Perry 2002). However, to claim that this research is purely "my" work would amount to dishonesty and disrespect for my participants. Although they did not write any parts of the thesis, their voices are ever-present[196].

Evidently, the above explanation addresses the perceived conflict between individualism and collectivism. It has shown clearly how individualism and collectivism can be respectfully negotiated by PAR researchers. Consequently, PAR literature must avoid implying that the production of a thesis undermines the participatory process on which it is based (Klocker 2011).

Action to Generate Solutions
I used Osborn's (1963) idea of brainstorming as a method of generating solutions to problems; the method of generating ideas, increasing creative efficacy and finding solutions to problems. As a guide, I used his basic procedure for group brainstorming:

1. Posing clear questions to the group.

2. Asking the group to generate ideas with no criticism of or attempts to limit the type and number of ideas. Encouraging as many divergent ideas as possible without any censorship.

3. Discussing, critiquing, and possibly prioritizing the brainstorming results for later action. A convergent stage where ideas are synthesised into the ones that are judged as most applicable to the subject matter.

I encouraged participants to limit our discussions around the areas identified by participants (Juthberg & Ericson-Lidman 2015), and encouraged them not to criticize the ideas of others either implicitly (through facial expressions or other nonverbal behaviours) or explicitly (like "That is a crazy idea! No! Wow!"). Participants had the opportunity to examine in detail the current social reality of Ogoni. Each had the opportunity to brainstorm around the two main ideas set out in the introduction to analyze the situation from different perspectives, and I listened carefully to what was said and what was not said. Participants spoke freely and gave their views about the

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[196] See interview transcript- appendixes 4 & 5

disheartening and deep-seated realities in Ogoni society, which they believed are caused by what they referred to as Shell/Government's "invasion".

Participants were able to criticize each other constructively, as they engaged in historical and comparative analysis of the present Ogoni society with the past. They were all interested to talk about MOSOP, which most of them saw as not meeting the Ogoni expectations. There was a clear distinction between what participants referred to as "political MOSOP' - those leaders/elites who used MOSOP for their personal gains and "grassroots MOSOP" - the ordinary members who claim they have no information with regards to the current affairs of MOSOP. Participants discussed about external intervention and imposition of new lifestyle that has disrupted the cohesive nature of the Ogoni society. Some young members of the movement explained this:

> I think MOSOP in a way has missed its focus (FGPMNY 02/06/2018).
>
> MOSOP is [now] a political movement and a one-man system right now (FGPVDP 06/05/2018).
>
> … we have seen strong influence of government and the oil industry in the activities of MOSOP and we see members of MOSOP, Ogonis, who are now advocating in favour of government and the oil industry. That suggests that money is involved. There is some kind of compromise" … I think that the solution lies with MOSOP reconnecting to local people for the people to become the strength of MOSOP (FGPFNY 02/06/2018).

Some were very emotional about it; here is what one of the participants said:

> for me, I am very, very angry with our MOSOP today. It is good for nothing. They [leadership of MOSOP] are now our problem because they want to help themselves…" (FGPAAY 02/06/2018).

Also, some spoke about how their chiefs have compromised the Ogoni fight for justice.

> I know some of the chiefs have been compromised because sometimes if you discover that some of their sons belong to one cult or the other. So, they will find it difficult to come up and give law as in a kind of treatment that if you violate this, something will be given to or you. In that regard, some of our chiefs have been compromising. So, that's why you see the problem Ogoni and when Shell or one company will come and give them some little money they will forget the struggle of Ogoni and have their own selfish interest (FGPGDP 06/05/2018).

Another participant supported this:

> What I want to say concerning this issue is that most of our leaders they have deviated from the way they ought to do. Like now, in most of our villages now, most of the paramount rulers [explained in chapter 1], if Shell wants to do something, it may be that they want to help the whole community or they want to help some youths in the community, you will see that instead of the paramount ruler to give what he is supposed to give to the community, what he will he do, he himself and his cabinet will hijack it. In essence, what I want to say is that they're compromising (FGPULLP 06/05/2018).

However, there was no evidence to suggest that the grassroots MOSOP withdrew their commitment to the general body of MOSOP. Their determination was to fight for change within the movement. These extracts are clear evidence of their knowledge of the issues, and it gave them the opportunity to think and work towards freedom. It made them think about what kind of approach they should take to tackle the problems. Majority of the participants proposed a number of techniques that will facilitate change: workshops and seminars that will, especially deter the youth from causing trouble

in the communities to focus on the Ogoni cause. Below is an example of one of the conversations I had with a youth participant in relation to his new understanding as regards youth involvement in violent activities:

> **Animator:** Do you feel like jumping and getting a gun so that you're powerful too?
>
> **FGPGDP:** I don't feel like jumping into it because I know that everything in life has to do with determination and decision. They've decided to do it so despite what they are doing, despite the intimidation, I have decided not involve myself in any cult [violent group] activities".

The picture became clearer and it was interesting how individual contributions shaped their collective experiences especially as they call for equality, justice and integration. At the end of each of these sessions, we had a brief process of evaluation using the feedbacks that we arrived at.

Relying on Hall's (2005) and Fals-Borda's (2006) positions, the PAR process generated space of mutual meaning-making (democratic knowledge) for the Ogoni participants who reflected on their own role in order to bring about social change. Participants gained better control over their social reality by "naming the system" (Cox & Fominaya 2009) in order to change it. For example, participants confronted their past by examining the current "internal colonial" structure in Ogoni established by Shell/Government. Their evaluation of the devastating experience and the ongoing threats from the Nigerian government encouraged their deliberation on how best MOSOP can "speak truth to power" (Hook 1994)- the Nigerian government.

Action with the Youth

The purpose for the participatory approach was for all participants across the selected research site to get involved. It was to foreground the perspectives of the 'marginalized Ogoni people' and to identify the challenges related to their fight for human rights and self-determination. This is why the research gave prominence to the idea of voice and participation amidst the complexities. To illustrate the interview process and to hear from one young participant, below is an interview excerpts. This interview happened during my pilot investigation so was less structured. The participants talked about what people say about Ogoni youth.

> **Animator:** What do you think about youth violence in Ogoni?
>
> **Youth:** yeah… I don't know why people [some Nigerians] think that we are the worst people in this country [Nigeria]. Yes, there is serious problem with our place [Niger Delta], and there is [are] bad boys who are causing trouble, but it is not all of us. You can check, you cannot find any militant group here in Ogoniland…
>
> **Animator:** Right, so what do you think, and how do you feel about it?
>
> **Youth:** Like I said, some of the guys [members of MEND & Avengers mostly from the Ijaw (from Delta State) community- are causing trouble but it is sad to say we are all bad people. I am always angry when I hear that. Most of us here [in Ogoni] don't like it and that is why we are fighting to change the story.
>
> **Animator:** Do you think there are people in Ogoni who will agree with you that there is no violence here [in Ogoni]?

Youth: Yeah… well I think you are talking [thinking] about the crisis in the communities here. Yes, it is true that our boys are causing trouble here and there, but it is still within Ogoni. You cannot hear that they carry guns against the government. That is the difference.

The above excerpts illustrate the flow of conversation between the young researcher and myself, and it is evident that the tone of the participant is recurrent throughout the data. The excerpts illustrate the approach to verbal questions and prompts that I took. How I initiated the conversations with a question and the response of the participant. However, I sensed, at some points, that the desire for data had a powerful effect on me in interviews and there was a need to consciously remind myself of the need to really listen.

Knowledge and Learning Needs

The collaborative process helped participants to appreciate and support the positive action they desired. They talked about what they knew and did not know and the importance of the knowledge generated as the starting point for building support for change. Participants were able to say what they needed to do in order to tackle the ongoing brutal approach of Shell/Government and reprisal activities from Ogoni youth. Among the issues raised were (1) genuine negotiation and agreement between Shell/Government and the Ogonis; (2) sanitizing their environment- air, land and sea; (3) respect for the Ogoni cultural values; (4) refrain from actions that incite internal division leading to violence in most cases; (5) the needs of the Ogoni woman and youth empowerment. Apart from the common idea shared, the women raised some of their concerns. Below is a comment from one of the women participants:

> "[…] let me use my mother as an instance, my mum while she grew up, she grew up in the midst of other boys and she did not have, till now, she doesn't have any sister. She was the only girl. They never allowed her to go to school because they feel women you don't need train women in school, reason being that very soon she will marry and leave the house so what's the need training them in school. So, she did not have that opportunity of going to school (FGPEKB-D 21.04.2018).

We examined the idea from two possible directions: what individuals and the entire Ogoni society can do to help resolve the issues. This was to raise their awareness in order to create realistic expectations in dealing with the issues. Though participants, realized change cannot come overnight, our discussions gave them some confidence and realistic picture of what was obtainable.

Self-identification was a common theme among participants in the groups, and because their voices were prioritized, it was an opportunity for them to personally process the information that was shared. Participants were also unique in their ability to blend and see meaning with the other's perspectives. It was fascinating to see how they allowed the experience to shape their perception. What became obvious within each group was that participants felt their thoughts were inadequate to deal with the challenging situation, but the safe space created made them see success from their own perspective (Checkland 1999).

Possibilities for Change

At various times, participants came to the session with expectations that made an important starting point for the day. At one of the sessions, for example, just before we started, a young participant said: "I have been thinking a lot about what we discussed since the last interview" (FGPEKB-D 21.04.2018). It was a discussion we had about how MOSOP could facilitate the Ogoni clean-up[197]. Naturally, the comment set the ball rolling. It was fascinating to see how participants engaged in talking about the kind of activities and skills that were needed to aid them carry out the necessary steps toward effecting the needed change. One of the commonest examples cited was the pressure that was enforced by MOSOP in 1993[198] which got the attention of the government.

We further examined the issues and discussed the difficulties that may be involved. Apart from looking at the harsh reaction of the government, we reflected on the polarisation of MOSOP and the unpredictable reaction from the armed security agents who represents the government by supervising oil activities in Ogoni. To overcome these obstacles, we emphasised the need for collective will since the process of change must start from within. It was a consensus that this was central as regards shaping their identity and motivating them for action (Ganz 2001). As one young participant remarked:

> [what] …MOSOP should be doing now is carrying out reorientation seminars and workshops that will help them get acquainted with the youths and as well the communities and then re-educate the people just like Ken and his companions as at then were also doing from place. And then, some of these youths that are well-inclined should be carried along as well, as frontiers of the social movement (FGPASTMM 05/06/18).

The evidence above shows how Ken Saro-Wiwa's nonviolent agitation can facilitate change if conceived and acted appropriately.

PAR Action with Individual Groups

Specifically, I discuss the context of the struggle, as well as share examples of praxis. It should be noted that the Ogoni example expanded upon here represents an important addition to social movement learning. Not only is the context shared, but I also illustrate how knowledge emerged through social movement learning processes embedded in the struggle.

PAR Action with MOSOP

There was no actual event in which I participated as an activist and a researcher, but during my focus group interviews with activists (see figure 12), they discussed their past demonstrations against the oil companies, a number of activists were badly beaten by the military and arrested.

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[197] The UNEP report that charged the Shell/government to clean up the Ogoni environment.
[198] Ogoni peaceful march led Ken Saro-Wiwa- see chapter 1.

Figure 12: Photo of PAR session with MOSOP

Here are the feelings of some participants who are engaged in the current Ogoni struggle.

> … have you seen what the government has done to us [the Ogonis]? All our attempt to stop them [government], as you can see, is not working. They [government] have been lying to us that they will help us but all we can see is to instigate conflicts between the communities so that they can continue exploiting us. Like Ken Saro-Wiwa, we are mobilising our people informing them about this (FGPFDFF 07.05.2018).

> Whatever the consequences, we shall overcome the brutality at all cost. Let's just put our heads together. I mean government should know that guns or killing us will not work again (FGPFNY 02.06.2018).

> … our movement is determined and we shall be successful (PFNG 16/04/2018)

> I will be happy if you tell the whole world about why the Ogoni people are fighting for justice. What we need now, may be, is to come up with solutions to our problems (FGPHKKB 12.06.18).

In many ways, these reflect the process through which this research came to be embedded in and owned by the Ogoni movement. It shows the unrelenting commitment of members in their desire to see justice. The evidence from the Ogoni activists is an indication of the strength and rootedness of this research- a clear indication of their consensus against the Shell/Government oppressive plan.

The PAR process provided the space for members to develop their own activist strategies; though they agreed that this must ultimately be coordinated by the leadership within the movement. Participating activists were able to connect struggles of the past with their present action. For instance, the violent approach of Adaka Boro, and the Ogoni voice which some count as victorious, since the government attempt to silence the movement has not achieved success. Further reflection on this led movement members involved in the previous iteration of struggle to point out that exclusion of the grassroots members in mobilization undermines the movement's potential impact as they have the most at stake.

This analysis was echoed and deepened by all members present, including women who participated in some of the combined (men and women) discussions. As a result, participating activists discussed the possibility with regard to major shift in the current movement mobilization, as emphasis was placed on addressing this power imbalance within the movement - a process still

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ongoing but rooted in movement reflections and strategic revisions. The commitment to this democratising analysis born of these reflections is indicated not only by the women's agenda and follow-through detailed above, but also by the fact that this agenda has been supported by the many male members of the movement. This link between movement reflection and actions is indicative of the mutually owned relationship between research process and movement praxis.

PAR with Women

At focus group interviews with women (see figure 13), we discussed power relations and contextual factors that have impacted on their well-being and empowerment (see participatory workshop, Chambers 1997). They identified ways (like meetings, workshops etc.) that will facilitate their collective effort to challenge the current injustices faced by Ogoni women.

Figure 13: Photo of Ogoni women at a PAR session

Their ideas were tested at subsequent focus group interviews where participants recognised and affirmed the previous understanding shared. Data gathered from these discussions were regularly reviewed to ensure content validity; some were modified according to need. However, I have to say that some of the sessions comprised prolonged debates, challenging presumptions and relearning the approach of working with people. It took up most of the scheduled time of the one hour research period. The sessions were more like advocacy training and building up action for change. Below is a summary of the pattern of reflection, analysis and action that was incorporated into the PAR discussion sessions for women's empowerment.

Advocacy training

Considering the discussion so far, this sub-section may sound like a sudden revelatory moment. I intentionally reflect here on what I think was the major issue of concern for the women. Coming from their marginalized story point of view, it was obvious at all our focus group sessions that the women were more interested to talk about training in skills.[199] They laid strong emphasis on

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[199] This could be from their experience of working with NGOS.

community based advocacy training to equip grassroots women with skills[200] that will allow them organise their thoughts around issues of importance, as well as the ability to freely participate in the Ogoni struggle. One middle aged participant explained how this could be done:

> the men are afraid of us because we [women] can push them to change their way [thinking/mentality] of doing things. The best way is for us [women] also to learn how to prepare and practice speeches like them [men]; write petitions to address our issues like violence against woman [women] and empowerment in our community (FGPPVBB 12.06.2018).

Evidently, the women participants understood empowerment as the authority to exercise their own freedom and access to the decision-making body. They highlighted various sources of power and identified a number of factors that will facilitate this: courage and educational qualification of women in the family, self-confidence and economic independence. Also, they related the different cultural barriers[201] imposed on women suggesting that the process of empowerment goes beyond the acquisition of education or employment. They argued that strategies and programmes for women empowerment must take a more holistic approach that creates opportunities and resources with endeavours to change the culturally entrenched patterns such as daily workload, access to resources, family and social relations (Aziz, Shams & Khan 2011).

Below is an example of how women who participated in the research process developed a better understanding of empowerment as a process

Individual empowerment action	Collective empowerment action	Community's action for women empowerment
Good understanding of empowerment. Improved communication with men. Increased confidence and the ability of women to negotiate actions in accordance with their freewill. Women enjoyed participating in group work and discussion as it provided them the space to share their feelings and experiences. Group discussions have given them confidence in daily life interactions.	The formation of informal women group to work on women related issues. Formation of training group for decision making processes. The opportunity for women from the village to attend public gathering and participate despite suppression by men. Strengthen the Federation of Ogoni Women's Association (FOWA) to be able to participate in political issues at local and state levels.	Ogoni men in communities, government and non-governmental organisations must support women's demand for girl child education. Women convinced that their challenging of the status quo is felt by men in the communities. Less threat to women who wish to participate in the dialogues in the community. Opportunity for women to have an office at the MOSOP head office and be elected to any office in the movement. Community must engage with nongovernmental organisation to support counselling of female survivors of violence in their communities.

Table 1: Summary of Women's collective action plan

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[200] I imagined it will form part of our future work when I return to Nigeria after my studies.
[201] E.g. gender roles determined conformity like early marriage.

The above table gives an idea of how women enjoyed their participation in the research process and how they learned about communication skills in their personal life. It shows women's need for free social space to discuss and share their issues. Their collective actions exposed the fact that empowerment issues that affect their daily lives were more than a personal agenda, so they need collective action and political struggle to create structures that will support the transformation of the status quo.

Learning and Challenges from PAR Process

My seven months (counting both pilot and fieldwork) experience in the field was a period of uncertainty. Due to the volatile nature of the field, I wondered whether things would go on well or the possibility of an unexpected crisis situation that would force me out of the field. In fact, I had a disquiet feeling from the first moment I entered Ogoniland until I finished.

Reflection on Selection and Engagement Process
Although my gatekeeper was good at negotiating with participants, through my past experience, I realized it was necessary to establish good rapport with the initial contacts so they will be asset to help us build trust as we entered the different communities and places to set up interviews. Though the negotiation process were sometimes discouraging because of how the process took time, but due to ethical considerations, I ensured that potential participants had a clear understanding about the research and also that their participation was voluntary.

Another thing that proved challenging, which I did not anticipate, was the gap between my initial contacts (participants) and the way I struggled in trying to reach out to them when I returned back to the field for the feedback process. About this, Seale (1998) remarked that having realistic expectations of timelines and voluntary participation as well as working through setbacks before considering an alternative plan if necessary. This indicates that while there were fruitful moments during the research process, there were challenges that go with the research process.

Learning from Field Notes
During the research period, it became obvious that my car was visible across the communities that we drove through or the ones we had interviews in. I could feel there was a curiosity about my presence in Ogoni and what I was doing - this included the military officers I met at their sandbag barricades around the communities, on perpetual patrol in Ogoni due to the internal crisis between communities and also to crackdown on illegal oil activities. In order not to be mistaken for a spy, I did my best to build good rapport with almost all that I met. It was interesting that nearly all the

military men were from the North[202], so I spoke the Hausa language to them, which made a huge difference.

My suspicion of my being visible to the people became clear when a barber[203] told me that he did not see my car drive past his shop for days, so he thought I had left. It also became clear to me that those who participated in the research shared their experience with other community members. In fact, participants (like the barber) that I was able to build such rapport with connected me[204] with other potential participants. Seale (1998) calls such experience a 'snowball effect', where participants connect the researcher with other potential participants. This experience, I trust, increased the importance of my research and encouraged participation from the across the research site.

From my judgment, the research participants had no issue with my research content, but rather they needed more time to get to know about me and my interest in doing a research in Ogoni. This was for me a good insight into what a research with a marginalized community mean.

Limitations
There is no doubt that the PAR process was fascinating and opened up new ways of learning for me, but not without its challenges. Firstly, I look at the limitation of this research process from the point of view of bounded rationality, which is that the researcher's ability to reason is restricted to cognitive capacity or the quality of information and amount of time at hand (Simon 1956; Jones 1999; Bendor 2010). I created concepts and models in order to help my understanding of certain behaviours and surprises. Like the example I shared earlier, I arrived in Ogoniland with the widespread Nigerian prejudice that the Ogoni are naturally violent, and repeatedly interrogated participants about this during the interviews. However, my blind spot was challenged in all the conversations I had with participants whose multiple perspectives, yet same, on the Ogoni social world revealed a different reality.

The second point is about power relations. As demonstrated repeatedly here in this section, PAR works with local capacity to bring about changes in power relations. However, the process may generate or worsen local and existing conflict. As Chambers (1992) and Pretty et al. (1995) argue, there is no such a thing like harmonious community, hence the marginalized are not members of a uniform mass of poor. The blind spot for me around this was that I did not realize at the initial stage that sensitive information should not be shared with a foreigner. This was a barrier at some of the focus group interviews. As marginalized group, people were apprehensive, though not in all

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[202] Which can easily make one thing of the North vs South East political tensions explained in chapter 1
[203] My usual place to have my hair cut- he participated in one of the focus group discussions.
[204] Through my gatekeeper since I did not give out my Nigerian number to anyone- my research information sheet had my Irish number on it.

instances, to express their views for fear of any consequences. On the other hand, some were confined to the structures of power. For example, their views must be in line with the chiefs who have control on every aspect of the Ogoni life.

Disclosures-

1. I acknowledge that the experience was good but I must say that I struggled to cope with all challenges, especially the lack of control in relation to the different perspectives from participants. Using Ericson-Lidman and Stranberg's (2018) description, I was like "…balancing on a slack rope in a world of compromises". As I journeyed through the process, however, I discovered that the uncertainties, which I worried about, were necessary; else, it would have been pointless from the point of view of PAR process.

2. Looking back at the PAR process, it is clear that participants needed time to understand their role in the research process and to understand the PAR cycle. Though the initial plan on paper was straightforward, the reality on ground proved difficult and challenging.

3. From the point of view of ethics, I realised that participants are giving their consent to participate in unknown challenges (Meyer, 1993). Though the interview time and locations were negotiated with participants, I discovered there was need to be more flexible to allow participants enough space to think about their participation.

4. Due to the challenging situation and to avoid unintended risks, I did not have formal follow-up sessions. But informal follow-ups, which was through conversation with some participants, some felt it is high time the Ogoni gave up in their fight for justice since there is no end in sight to Shell/Government's brutality on the people. Some sense of "let's take what is offered and let go".

5. While some participants felt the sessions were opportunity to speak freely about problems in Ogoniland, it was challenging to make others talk. It was easy to relate with those who have louder voices (Koch & Kralik, 2006), than those who were quiet. But interesting to see how PAR built the capacity of some participants to accepting others and their differences.

6. The PAR approach was successful in raising participants' awareness as regards mobilising themselves for action. The building of trust and safety during the process is unavoidably an essential tool for participants in addressing the internal division and conflict they reflected upon.

Reflexivity, Trust and Voice

From the discussions in both sections, it is evident that research fieldwork requires careful preparation and negotiation with participants. Embedded in the field and in the everyday life of the Ogoni people, particularly using fieldwork process, I now discuss my positionality and relationality which helped in generating a shared understanding in relation to what the research has achieved for participants and myself. How I related to and interacted with participants in respectful and participatory ways, and how the relationship influenced the research process. As Manning (2018) suggests, by understanding these concepts of positionalities, relationalities, reflexivities and intersubjectivities, and embodying the values they promote, empowering methodology is more likely to succeed in meeting both their needs and those of participants. This is particularly significant for me in this research context - which is working in unfamiliar contexts with marginalized indigenous Ogoni communities, where historical relations, cultural practices and linguistic differences played major roles with regards to the findings of the research (Butcher et al. 2015; Manning 2018). I discuss this from the point of view of building trust with participants and enabling their voices to be heard and acknowledged in the research.

Trust and Voice

Cunliffe (2004:407) defines reflexivity as "questioning what we, and others, might be taking for granted- what is being said and not said- and examining the impact this has or might have". According to her, being reflexive is about having a heart and not a technique. It is a way of being in relation with others that brings with it moral and ethical considerations. Thus, it requires us to be solicitous and respectful of differences. However, being reflexive does not give us definitive answers to problems but highlights the need to engage in critical questioning and challenging one's assumptions, decisions, actions and interactions, and issues that have potential moral and ethical implications. Continually, I questioned my positionality as someone from the North-Central part of the country, a priest and my relationship with the marginalized Ogoni participants within the context of the PAR methodology. For Butcher (2013) and Manning (2018), this requires an understanding of "Self" and "Other" where the researcher sees *themselves* as the "Other", rather than participants. It placed me in an "out of place" position which is highly self-reflexive allowing me to learn from participants as they share aspects of their everyday lives during our discussions.

I acknowledge that I write from a position of power and privilege, but at the same time, the voices of the marginalised Ogoni are located with mine in the telling of their story. My research is localised, grounded in making meaning of their struggle, and through reflection, dialogue and collaboration, we explored their organising strategies. This approach helps me to construct a

historical, social and cultural representation of Ogoni working together in groups. This, according to Butcher (2013), reverses the conventional power dynamic between the researcher as knowing and the researched as known. It placed me in a position (ethical) where I was able to build trust and participants understood as empowered without the knowledge being "given" to them, which is an inherently power-laden gesture.

Through the sharing of their stories, we learned from each other on the importance of participation in such democratic process which engenders trust among them. It is an example of the intersubjective nature of developing cross-sectional understandings in this case. In fact, the intersubjective nature of the research facilitated by thinking beyond considering participants as research subjects to seeing them as participants as with the PAR methodology adopted. Thus, through building trust and gaining access to their everyday routines, I was able to collect sufficient data that produced the findings. The evidence supports my claims of understanding participants' truths about their lives. As Butcher (2013) argues, by remaining true to oneself and other participants, the research can gain the depth of access to make truthful and trustworthy claims in research outputs.

However, it is necessary to note that the idea of telling other peoples' stories is problematic because it repositions the researcher as "knowing" participants: especially in making the decision about whose voice should be heard, and how that is brought to the fore of research outputs. In this context, the PAR methodology created the space that allowed participants to discuss their story of marginalization; to voice their own understanding within the context of their social, cultural and historical locations. Through self-reflexive questioning of my own positionality, I sought not to legitimize my own voice over that of participants by maintaining the contextual space familiar to participants; hence their voice was prioritized.

The presumption that researchers give voice to participants is flawed, since our process rather created space in which participants made their voices heard. It reasserts the notion of the researcher as a learner, which implies a need to listen not in order to deliver solutions to participants, but to raise awareness of their struggles. As Cunliffe (2004:745) opined, "being reflexive doesn't give us definitive answers to problems but highlights the need to engage in critical questioning and deeper debate around taken-for-granted issues that have potential moral and ethical implications".

From the experiences shared above, gaining research access to specific communities and contexts is rarely straightforward as things do not go as planned. Due to the situation of my field, explained earlier, there was no guarantee that what I identified in terms of research objectives could be reached. But I have to say that our interaction necessitated some changes which show how working collaboratively with research participants on topics and issues of relevance and importance to them

can determine the direction of a research. Hence, my initial research topic focused on youth activism, but the voices of participants rather directed the research to looking at Ogoni resistance.

It is very difficult to gain the trust of a marginalized community as they have experienced many deceptions (as reported by participants) in the past. They recalled how many people arrived and did research about them but used it for their advantage. I was straightforward about the objective of my research. Bringing back the research findings to them for validation made a huge difference to those who participated in the evaluation process.

Conclusion

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that PAR is a labour-intensive methodology. This section reported my research experience in the field. I reflected on the value of its participative, qualitative and cyclical characteristics. I discussed some of the barriers that emerged in the process of knowledge generation, and I explained how I negotiated the complexities of positionality and representation through the democratic process of data collection.

The section, however, did not claim that the approach taken is the only way to engage in research with marginalised people, but showed how the process encouraged me to be reflexive, which helped in addressing the issues of positionality and representation. The section demonstrates how the chosen methodology provided space for marginalised Ogoni people to voice their own understanding of oppression, identity and work from within the context of their social, economic, and historical locations. Hence, PAR is a dynamic methodology relevant to 21st-century researchers, activists, and NGOs working in postcolonial contexts.

The next section, informed by the discussion on participants' understanding of their social reality and my reflection on the research experience, presents an analysis and reflection of the data in an intelligible and interpretable form in order to identify trends and relations in accordance with the research aims.

Section 3: Data Analysis Process and Reflection
Introduction

This section explores further and reflects on the method of data analysis used, relating it to the wider methodology of PAR. It is important to remind my readers that the primary methods used to collect data regarding the experiences of participation were: semi-structured and focus group interviews, participant observation and reflective journaling throughout the research process.

I adopted the Thematic Analysis (TA) approach, which is widely used in qualitative research. I followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) step-by-step approach of identifying, analyzing, organizing, describing and reporting themes found in the data collected. I tried to understand the complexity of meanings in the data, which allows me to engage with the data and the analysis. The thematic method analyses the latent meanings, the assumptions and ideas that lie behind what is explicitly stated. This can be approached in either an inductive or deductive way. I adopted the inductive method in order to bring together and integrate the findings of my research. That is, coding the data without trying to fit it into any pre-existing coding frame or my analytic preconceptions (Braun & Clarke 2006). TA is therefore the most appropriate method used to analyse the data generated as it helped me in presenting the data more effectively and to reflect on its reality (Creswell 2009; Miles & Huberman 1994).

The flexible nature of TA allowed me to determine themes (Braun & Clarke 2006), making sure that what was mapped out during the analysis closely matched the content of the data. Though it is impossible to be purely inductive, as researchers must bring something to the data when analyzing it (Green & Thorogood 2014), I can say with certainty that I was guided by the inductive approach since the orientation here prioritized participants. As Crawford, et al. (2008) noted, it helped me to allocate narrative from the diverse data and for understanding of participants' thoughts and experiences. The process allowed me to identify numerous cross-references between the data and evolving themes (Hayes 1997), and as I dealt with diverse subjects via interpretations (Boyatzis 1998). TA allowed my active role in identifying the themes and selecting those that were of interest to my research (Taylor & Ussher 2001). It is evident that the method is not tied to any pre-existing theoretical framework and its theoretical freedom allowed for an infinite interpretation of data (Alhojailan 2012) analysed in this research.

The process prioritized the diverse experiences and meanings of participants' worldview reported in the data (Braun & Clarke 2006; King 2004; Crawford, et al. 2008). I discussed the process of analysis under the following headings: articulating marginalization within data analysis; initial process of data analysis; discussion of data analysis process using Braun and Clarke six-phase; inadequacy of language; participation in the PAR process; the researcher as an instrument of analysis; analysis on PAR ethics.

Articulating Marginalization within Data Analysis

Based on the established theoretical framework, I am confident to say that this chapter clearly demonstrated how the PAR process highlighted the participants' need of emancipation (Greenwood & Levin 2006). Working with a marginalized group, it is necessary to say that participants of this

research required special protection both physical and emotional due to the risks involved such as the fear of being spotted by government security agents or other participants from other communities talking with a stranger. I considered their protection given their vulnerability as a result of the research process and the communication of findings (Cahill & Torre 2007), especially during our feedback sessions[205]. Supporting and protecting participants to communicate or articulate their stories was one of my basic principles during the research process. Thus, crucial to the PAR process was the ability of participants to think creatively about how to contextualize their knowledge in order to establish for themselves the necessary strategies or tactics to facilitate their struggle for justice.

According to Jackson (2008) and Hall (1981), PAR data analysis is rarely the subject of focus in PAR literature, perhaps because researchers may work in greater isolation from participants during the data analysis phase. Nevertheless, data analysis can play a vital role in addressing the concerns expressed by participants. This research foregrounds data analysis within a PAR project, focusing on the use of thematic analysis. That is, I described how and why I arrived at using the thematic method for analysing data from a PAR study with marginalized Ogoni participants. I explain why this is a useful data analysis method for this research, particularly how participants expressed deep sense of understanding of their social reality that leaves them vulnerable.

As I understood more about the difficult context or the vulnerable[206] situation of participants, I wondered how I might include it more explicitly within my project. During our feedback session, I brought up this on several occasions to get their impression. Participants agreed that it was important to include everything they shared. They gave their consent that I should express their feelings in my research on their behalf. Definitely, it presented a challenging task: to represent their perspectives without rendering them vulnerable.

This was of special concern because the stories they shared were at times quite sensitive. While several participants expressed eagerness to make issues they were facing public regardless of the personal ramifications, even though some were not comfortable to speak or had to look out for a nod from other participants before they said something, possibly for fear of being attacked by the other for letting out sensitive issues, I did not want them to face consequences for speaking about the frustrating circumstances that could expose them to unforeseen danger. This justifies the reason why I anonymize the participants' voices throughout this thesis.

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[205] For example of feedback outcome- see appendix 10.
[206] Mostly about their security since the situation is ongoing.

Initial Process of Data Analysis

It is a fact that we now live in a technological world and digital connectivity has become like the oxygen we breathe. Undeniably, this is quite essential for researchers in this modern time. It is so useful that it has become an integral part of all of our lives. However, it does make our lives miserable when it fails us. As a result, I engaged the process of searching for codes and themes manually rather than using a computer software programme. This was due to my limited knowledge of the modern technological innovations designed for the purpose. I did not want to risk getting confused in the midst of the large data that I had. Though computer software is helpful for organizing and examining large data, it is not capable of the intellectual and conceptualizing processes required neither to transform data nor to make any judgment (Thorne 2000; King 2004; Coffey & Atkinson 1996; Tehmina 2003; Welsh 2002). Nevertheless, I agree with Basit's (2003) argument that both the manual and digital approaches are intellectual exercises.

The data analyzed here was generated from the methods used for this research: individual/focus group interviews and field observation notes. The interviews were audio-recorded and immediately transcribed verbatim - orthographically into a large data set with all spoken words, sounds, hesitations, cut-offs in speech, false starts, giggles, laughter, long pauses recorded[207]. Punctuations were used to indicate actions of participants. For example, I used commas in cases of continuing intonation and inverted commas for reported speech. Editing of transcript and inaudible words are symbolized by three full stops in a row (see Box 1).

Since details can be revealing, nearly all heard recorded actions were transcribed. However, it was necessary to remove a few words that added no meaning as regards understanding of the data text (Braun & Clarke 2006). From the data excerpts, it is evident that there was no clean-up of transcripts. Indeed, the process was tough and time consuming, but extremely important because it gave me great opportunity to familiarize with the data (Riessman 1993). It brought back the field memory and allowed me to find a good connection between participants' voices and the data. It allowed me to have a sense of the emerging phenomena in relation to what codes and themes could be used to explain the phenomena. In short, I identified and took note of some codes and themes during the transcription process.

It is important to mention that my observation data was placed side by side with the interview data during the analysis process, and the act of coding was done in tandem. I combined both the descriptive and reflective field notes. From the descriptive point of view, I was able to provide an in-depth description of particular settings and events, and participants' activities and behaviour and

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[207] See box 1

interactions[208]. While the reflective notes were basically commentary of the settings and participants. I was able to step back from the setting and explored moments of discomfort, detail revelations, ethical dilemmas, and methodological challenges. This approach allowed me to examine my own experience and belief in relation to participants.

Before engaging with the basic manual procedure of the cut-and-paste, note cards (Lofland 1971; Bogdan & Biklen 2003), I carried out the coloring and identification of extracts and codes from both the individual and focus group transcripts on a Microsoft Word page. I did the same with the observation notes. The two large interview transcripts (one containing the individual interview data and the other with the focus group data) were printed out on to about five hundred individual pieces of A4 paper and then stuck together in the appropriate order. There was much of drawing and re-drawing of thematic maps due to the size of the data[209]. The process was very tedious, but I found it interesting, illuminating and quite creative. It exposed and connected me with the data in a way that helped me to locate the important excerpts within the large data.

Discussion of Data Analysis Process using Braun and Clarke Six-Phase Method

While trying to analyze participants' voices to represent the marginalization they are experiencing may not seem like an empowering action, it is important to note that participants appreciated especially during our feedback sessions[210] seeing their struggles being presented to a larger audience. The more deliberate empowering aspects of this PAR study came from participants' engagement with the process which allowed them to express themselves creatively (discussion about strategies to adopt for their activism), and for the fact that each participant was recognized.

By presenting the multiple participant voices, the research reveals a tapestry of concerns rather than representing the singular struggle of any individual. This allowed for divergences and differences in perspectives of the marginalized Ogoni people rather than presenting a homogenous idea. Although participants did not actively participate in the analysis process, the results were readily discernible and understood by the participants (during the feedback session). This makes the research findings accessible to them rather than just for my academic qualification.

I illustrate how I carried out the process of analysis using Braun and Clarke's six-phase approach to thematic analysis. Although PAR data analysis is seldom the subject of focus in PAR literature as mentioned above, the data analysis unfolded in similar ways as more traditional qualitative methods. This process of thematic coding and sorting of data mirrors typical qualitative data

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[208] See appendix 2
[209] See Appendix 2 & 3
[210] See appendix 10

analysis methods. I tried to stay as true as possible to the original words of the participants. I did, however, made choices that were academic. As stated above, I reordered phrases at times to improve clarity for the reader. Adopting Braun and Clarke's (2006) six step approach idea, I explain this in the following headings: 1) Becoming familiar with data; 2) How initial codes were generated; 3) Searching for themes; 4) Reviewing of potential themes; 5) Defining and naming of themes; 6) Final report.

1. Becoming Familiar with the Data

I worked closely and familiarized myself with the depth and breadth of the transcribed interviews, observation notes and reflexive field notes. To have good ideas about the information that were of interest, I critically read the entire data transcript twice before I began the coding. I returned, several times, to the audio to clarify ambiguities and resolve inconsistencies within the data. My reading through the transcripts and listening to the audio recordings triggered some memories about the interview scenes and participants' reactions or about a particular question that I had asked which might be considered appropriate or inappropriate. I repeatedly went through the transcripts, coloured, underlined some portions of the data and made marginal annotations to highlight items that were of interest[211].

The notes that I made at this point were observational and casual rather than systematic and inclusive. It was not about coding the data yet, but for memory aids and triggers that would facilitate the coding and analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006). This was not just about reading the texts but thinking about what sense it made as regards participants' experiences and their assumptions, while interpreting their experiences and the kind of world that was revealed through their accounts. I illustrate this with an example taken from one of the interview transcripts:

> […] our fathers, forefathers were able to maintain our own system of government of our society. We were fishermen […], farming and eating [….] There was no fighting between any community […], there was nothing like cult in Ogoni. It is because of this struggle that all these things came to be […] Of a truth, of all the oil and gas that was produced in Ogoni here, we don't gain one Naira. […] Since 2011 that I left my job, until now I have no job. I am about 54years old now. I have neither a wife nor a child. I don't want have a wife. I don't even have a child. If it happens that I die now, I die like that. There will be nobody to represent me or to take care of the little property I have. No job. All of us that are in this house, none of us has a job. They don't give us jobs. They don't want us to succeed in life. They don't want us to become anything. All Nigerian government and Shell are after is to kill us and take away our riches (FGPJDB 29/04/2018).

Also, participants' perspectives on their oppressed conditions were reflected in their frustrations, complaints and concerns. Below are a few examples of quotes that I identified to explain this:

> Many of us are questioning how we're going to do this [strategy for action] with some of these problems [internal rift amongst MOSOP officials] that we have shared with you (PVGK 01/06/2018).

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[211] See appendix 2

> How are we supposed to progress [achieve change]? . . .if we [directed to MOSOP leaders] are united, for instance, we can bring our skill together and other things [ideas] that are more appropriate to tackle this problem. But what we have not is that people [some individuals] comes up with their own points to make us believe they are telling us the truth (PCNNG 07.05.2018).

> In fact, I have to be honest to say that I am confused about our behaviour, but we [Ogoni women] are not going to be left behind. I believe our confidence can bring us together to win this fight (PBWK 12.05.2018).

> the measuring stick for the government and shell is violence against us [Ogoni people]. It is true that they have now based their manipulation [strategy of government and Shell] on our weakness [division within Ogoni society], but I will tell you, situation like this [reference to PAR process] will teach us what do to. We really need to know how we can handle this fight (PCNNG 07.05.2018).

From these data excerpts, one can make this observation that participants' experiences reveal Ogoni past and current social realities, which suggests their frustration caused by the oppressed situation and their lack of determination towards new knowledge and strategy for change. The reported experiences also suggest the cause of violence, which is against the Ogoni social norm. As perfect requisites for analysis, these excerpts reveal the richness in the data and participants' honest account of the current social life of the Ogoni and their feeling toward it.

Nevertheless, not all extracts in the whole data *corpus* are as rich as the above, as some have little or nothing to say about the data. Primarily, I focused on selecting quotes that struck me as being particularly poignant and representative of participants' concerns and that are in line with my research context. In a few cases when there was a description of a negative event within my field notes and field journal but no direct quotes, I selected relevant excerpts from both notes. I pasted all selected quotes and field notes excerpts into one document and read through repeatedly, looking for commonalities between them. I read through the quotes and passages repeatedly until I was intimately familiar with them. The process was quite illuminating.

  2. How initial codes were generated

Relying on the experience from phase one, this stage was a systematic analysis of the data through coding. Before engaging the process of coding, I had to go through my interview data again and also study all the nine sets of field notes and note my comments on a Microsoft Word document on my computer. The process was smooth and helped me deal with the unclear notes. I generated codes inductively as each code represents an idea from a particular section of the data[212]. I assigned very broad codes to include multiple paragraphs. For example, my research participants during the interviews often refer to four periods of time when they talked about their own experience.

> Before this time, yes, as I earlier said […] the Ogoni people were very loving people, they are [were] very peaceful, they love their selves [themselves], love their brothers, they diplomatically handle issues between two person […] The Ogoni people are [were] hospitable, their main occupations is [was] fishing and farming and they are [were] ok with any of their products before this crisis […] We are ready to fight this […] MOSOP is ready to fight this until government come to talk to us… What will really be the

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[212] See Box 2, also see appendix 1

solution to the issues on ground is that federal government and Shell in collaboration, will understand that Ogoni needs some level of development. There should be massive employment that should take off these youths, so that they will be engaged in one thing or the other (PSMG 03/06/2018).

I used four codes to represent these periods: period 1 - "social harmony"; period 2 - "marginalization/oppression"; period 3 - "resistance"; and period 4 - "development". These codes helped me to categorize large segments of experiences into these different historical moments.

When considering how this contributes to PAR, which is crucial for this research, it is that these codes have conveyed the intensity of the concerns voiced by participants, through an authentic and emotive voice. Even though it is obvious that participants recognized, and often, various kinds of inequality within the Ogoni society they aspire to a good community. This they understand as being the pre-colonial and pre-Shell/Nigeria situation. That is to say, although there were disagreements among participants on some issues[213], I can claim credibility for their statements since they are corroborated across multiple individuals. In this way, these codes have brought Ogoni voices together to create a space for direct action, which reveals Ogoni hopes for a good future.

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), codes do not have to be fully worked-up explanations; they are building blocks for analysis and provide labels from the data that are potentially relevant to the research questions. This is important so we know that the codes indicated above were not considered definite. Thus, I continued with the process of bringing out the initial codes by constructing a thematic matrix[214] that provided labels that were relevant to the research questions. While the size of the thematic matrix was large, I felt that it was necessary to keep the texts as they appeared in the interview transcripts. This was to avoid possible errors in the process and to facilitate the identification of appropriate excerpts.

I used both the semantic (descriptive) and latent (interpretive) style of coding (Braun & Clarke 2006). While the semantic code provided succinct summary of some portions of the data or described the content of the data, the latent code helped to identify meaning that lay beneath the semantic surface of the data. Examples of semantic and latent coding style:

Semantic or descriptive code- 'mutual relationship'- "There was mutual relationship between all the Ogonis" (PSMG- see Box 2).

Latent of interpretive code- 'self-determination'- "[…] nothing is working in this Ogoniland […] how long are we going to stay like this? [...]" (PFNG- see Box 2).

The first code- 'mutual relationship' represents participants' language and concepts while the second code- 'self-determination' is my interpretation of participants' expression. It is important to note that

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[213] E.g. about levels of marginalization of women and approaches to resistance due to sectional politics mentioned in the previous chapter
[214] For sample see Box 2

none of the participants used such a code to describe their experience; it is my conceptual interpretation of their account (Grant & Osanloo 2014; Adom et al. 2018).

The fact here is that I am able to generate more descriptive codes than the interpretive codes at the initial stage, but as I gained more experience during the process, the interpretive codes became much easier to see. Whichever way this is interpreted, Braun and Clarke (2006) recommended that it is important for all codes to be relevant to answering one's research question. Thus, my concentration was on the codes that were relevant to my research questions.

As thematic analysis is not prescriptive about how segments of data are coded, I did not produce a code from every line of the transcript. I did the coding in large and small chunks and since I was not sure of what might be relevant to my research questions at this point, I had to read every item and code the relevant pieces before moving on to others. My approach was much more inclusive, and I had so many codes since it is much easier to discard codes than to return to the entire data (Braun & Clarke 2006). Technically, I coded a portion of data in more than one way by noting down the codes and marking the text that was associated with it. As I explained earlier, I did some colouring and indenting of the texts and coding on my computer MS Word page before I printed out the transcripts[215]. The rest of the coding was done manually on the hard copy data pages by identifying clearly the code name and highlighting the portion of the text associated with it[216].

After the first action, I went over the process again and identified new relevant excerpts. New codes were needed to capture the new pieces of data that were identified. Also, there was need to modify some existing codes to incorporate new material. For example, I initially had a code *insecurity* from the excerpt: "[…] the kind of violence we see today came in when there was an uprising against Shell" (PCNNG 07/05/2018).

After going over the same piece, I decided to expand this code beyond *insecurity* to *political violence* to suit participants' expressions. I was able to code the entire data and collate those that were relevant to each code. An example of codes I generated from the data with a few data extracts collated for each code is shown in box 2. I was able to generate enough codes, some from more than one data item. This captured both the diversity and the pattern within the data. At each stage, I read closely the field notes data segments and it helped me to correct some codes when necessary or to come up with new codes to better capture the meaning behind them. I have to say I did not resist the temptation to create codes that were in line with those I had in the interviews. Hence, it is possible that it narrowed my vision as regards coming up with something different that was not there in the interview data. But even so, the number of codes that I was creating kept growing.

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[215] See Appendix 2
[216] See Appendix 6

3. Searching for themes

Here, the codes were used to generate themes to capture the important ideas about the data relevant to the research questions. It was an active process of making choices on how to shape the collated excerpts for quality analysis. As Braun & Clarke (2006) described, the process was like the work of sculptors, making choices about how to shape and craft their piece of stone (the raw data) into a work of art (the analysis). The coded data was reviewed in order to identify areas that were similar and overlap between the codes. The basic thing that did happened here was that codes that shared same characteristics were brought together so they can reflect and describe a coherent and meaningful theme in the data. For example, a number of codes clustered around marginalization, helplessness and awareness. A critical look at these revealed that they focused either on participants' experience of marginalization or on their responses to or ways of managing it.

One theme is constructed using all the codes relating to participants experience of marginalization/helplessness - *Political and Economic Marginalization of Ogoni*, and on the other hand the codes related to participants' management of the situation- *Ogoni freedom*; this, however, was later changed again into *freedom and development* after considering a number of codes[217]. While one single statement is important, it does not necessarily reflect the story, so after drawing lots of thematic maps, some codes were incorporated into some other codes that formed a theme. It provided the best mapping of what is in the data which are related to the research questions.

Again, a number of codes cut across the themes (e.g. the notion of *honourable Ogoni people*); about people who conform to the good principles of the Ogoni fight for justice and the *vultures* who betray the Ogoni vision of justice. That is those who have compromised the struggle by actively engaging in politics for their selfish gain. These did not form one obvious theme, but I have to say that they were not cases of undesirable overlap between themes. They show that certain issues may cut across themes and provide underlying framework for telling a coherent story about what goes on in the overall data. It explored the relationship between themes and considered how they work together in telling an overall story about the data. The fact therefore is that good themes are distinctive and could stand alone, but at the same time they still have to work with other themes to provide a meaningful and coherent picture of the data. For example, there is one central theme in this analysis that draws together most of the other themes - *social marginalization.*

I had as many themes as possible, including codes that did not clearly fit anywhere, but I was conscious of the fact that not everything in the data must be represented (King 2004); I omitted some of it. Even though I struggled with trying to examine and interpret every code to an equal

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[217] See Box 3a

degree and depth in the process of generating themes, I was able to analyse and report data that tells a particular story about participants' social world. Initially, I generated fifteen themes, but for the sake of coherence, I encapsulated them in six sufficient themes that defined the richness of my data. For brevity, only four of the selected themes are summarised in the example demonstrated in Box 3a.

The final themes captured are sufficient for an in-depth analysis and for answering the research questions. They provide a meaningful overview of the data by revealing participants' reactions to oppression and how it has shaped their socio-economic and political realities, their reaction for the sake of change, their response to this reality, and what they expect as regards solutions to the deep-seated injustice in Ogoniland.

4. Reviewing of Potential Themes

As noted in the previous section, I was dealing with a large dataset; thus a quality-check was imperative. That is it was necessary to review the themes in relation to the coded data. I re-examined the quality of the themes against the collated excerpts and checked if they matched the data. The boundaries of the themes were redrawn to check what was included and what was not, and about coherence so that it captures meaningfully the relevant data. There was no need to discard any of the themes for they were distinctive and coherent in relation to the entire data (Braun & Clarke 2006). Nonetheless, a few changes were made but not substantial ones.

Later, I discovered that some relevant issues in the data were not covered: how there were inadequacies in the initial coding. Furthermore, I generated a few new codes and inserted them into the existing themes especially those that overlapped substantially. The process generated subthemes under themes that seemed to share some unifying features. For example, the new codes generated were about oppression and violence. Certainly, this was central to participants' response to the oppressive structure. Here is an example of an extract that justifies my claim:

> let down by the federal government of the oil producing communities especially in Ogoniland, having waited for so long after the exit of the late leaders, nothing has been done even […] when federal government promises [promise] of coming to Ogoniland for clean-up, they keep promising that without accomplishing. I think for the youths, they were [are] tired of expecting the fulfilment of federal government promise to the land. I think with that, the world is changing and that also affects the climate where we are now in Ogoni […] (PNSKM 09/05/2018)

As a result, I constructed subthemes that speak of participants' experiences and reaction to oppression. Under the theme- 'structural violence', for instance, I generated subthemes like 'youth at risk and youth coping strategies' (see Box 3b).

From the above analysis therefore, I was able to draw these conclusions that:

1. what I came up with are indeed significant themes;

2. the themes say something about my data and the research questions;

3. the themes capture important issues related to the research subject;

4. I have meaningful data to support the themes generated;

5. The themes are coherent.

To borrow Atrride-Sterling's (2001) language, I was able to bring together the codes into a more manageable set of significant themes that clearly and succinctly summarised the data. Indeed, the process was tedious as it involved going over all the data and codes to determine whether the themes were distinctive, coherent and meaningfully captured what was needed to answer my research questions.

5. Defining and Naming of Themes

This phase involved defining and naming themes to ascertain what is unique and specific about each of them. I summed up the essence of each theme in a couple of sentences to show how coherent the overall story in the data was (see Box 3a). In line with the rules of TA (Braun & Clarke 2006), I was convinced that each theme selected has a singular focus. They are related but do not overlap so that they are not repetitive; and each directly addressed my research questions (see Box 3a).

Clearly, the process involved a deep thematic analytical work to shape the analysis with great attention to details. I selected the necessary excerpts to use for this analysis and at the same time set out the story of each theme around it. Rather than focusing on one data item, excerpts are generated from across the data *corpus* to show the coverage of the theme. For example, excerpts from different participants across the data show the coverage of the themes (see Box 3a).

Evidently, excerpts selected provided the structure for the analysis, which means that participants' stories gave me the opportunity to interpret the data and their meaning (Creswell 2003). As data does not speak for itself in the process of analysis, my interpretation revealed participants' perspectives and the reason for specific actions. Thus, through the descriptive analysis and discussion of the findings, I am able to show the relationship between my interpretations of participants' experiences of the current Ogoni social reality with my research questions.

For further explanation to the above assertion, an analysis of the theme "*social relationship*" is shown in box 4. It started with the general summary of the theme's core issue and then expanded by providing specific examples of other aspects of the theme using brief excerpts. Sufficient detail is provided to show the scope of the theme, and the longer excerpts are examples of evocative detail to show what it meant for the participants. I started the analysis of the excerpts by highlighting

some data features that provided the basis for interpretations around a broader practice of *social relationship* featured across the data. Clearly, the excerpts are participants' stories, but at the same time, it shows how analysis must move beyond the data such that it does not just report words but interpret and organize them within a larger overarching conceptual framework.

The process explained above was carried out through two broad approaches of thematic analysis: (1) the descriptive - using data in illustrative ways and (2) interpretive - where extracts are analyzed in more detail; it moves from surface meanings to implicit meanings (Wolcott 1994). Both approaches offer important analysis of data and serve different purposes. It is important to observe, however, that in every analysis, data is used to make a point and every analysis must be driven by what is relevant as regards answering research questions.

Thus, I have shown that each theme is developed not in its own right but in relation to the research questions and the other themes. The names given to themes are quite informative, concise and catchy; they are memorable and signal the focus of the theme and something about the content of the analysis. As discussed earlier, I made sure the excerpts[218] stayed close to the participants' language and also provided an immediate and vivid sense of what the themes were about.

In summary, a total of 175 codes[219] were generated. From these codes, 15 broad themes were generated. These were found to be linked with or connected with another, and were further condensed into 6 significant themes: Social relationship: Ogoni source of mobilization; political and economic marginalization of Ogoni; divide and rule: a repressive tactic against Ogoni; structural violence; MOSOP: articulation of Ogoni grievances; freedom and development. These are all discussed in chapter 5.

6. *Final report*

This phase is about producing a report, but since this is a PAR qualitative study, the process of analysis started at the commencement of my field work. This is demonstrated in chapter 3 where I explained what I did and how I was able to do it, respectively, while chapter 5 clearly identifies data (excerpts) that helped in answering my research questions. I have, in this chapter, shown my understanding and interpretation of participants' actions (the data) during our discussion sessions in the field, the process of coding and informal writing of notes and trying to make sense of the codes and theme generated.

The fact here is that this is a PAR study and it is important to note that the report cannot be limited to texts. So, the chapters highlighted demonstrate how knowledge was constructed (between participants and myself); the nature of our participation, and challenges encountered. Thus, the

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[218] See Box 3a
[219] See Box 5

empirical evidence (built on the participants' everyday experiences) is a clear example of the validity of the research findings. It was easier for participants to understand the concrete procedures as to why and how the research is carried out and how the outcome is rooted in the data generated. This renders the findings understandable to the Ogoni participants who are the affected persons (marginalized group), and to give them a basis for further discussion about strategies that will equip their struggle for justice

In summary, the thematic method adopted helped in finding commonalities, differences, patterns and structures. Creating codes helped in the construction of themes that suits the data. The process was very extensive but it allowed a great conversation between the data and myself (Anzul et al. 1991). It facilitated my understanding through asking questions about underlying causes of events within the data in order to compare participants' views across the data, and to change or drop themes and place them in logical order.

Inadequacy of Language

I had no understanding of the Ogoni language and culture; therefore, it was difficult especially during individual and focus group interviews to understand some of the participants who had little English. One of the vignettes from my research which is significant in that it illustrates how I came to a realization that this was a challenge, in one of our focus group interviews for instance, one of the participants referred to the multinational companies as "termites", which is a direct translation from the Ogoni language- meaning "the one who destroys". This was how one middle age participant summarized this: "we have never seen destruction in Ogoniland like what Shell has done to our social fabric and our environment. Not even war can cause such damage… (FGPSK, 05/05/2018).

Given that the Ogoni social movement is built 'from the ground up', with the diversity (in terms of its affiliate groups), I felt that this posed some difficulty as regards obtaining sufficient depth. Not being familiar with the culture made it difficult for me to understand issues from the perspective of the communities to gain knowledge that represented a general view[220].

Reading between the lines

During the processes of coding and naming themes, I considered not just what the person was saying but also what they were not saying. For example, a lengthy pause was for me either an indication that the participant was finding the subject difficult, or person was deciding what to say? Here is a concrete example:

Animator: What was the position of the elders in Ogoni before this time?

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[220] In the sense that participants were members of different communities from the 5 kingdoms, and with different ideas on issues sometimes

Participant: ermm so er [pause] I [. . .] the, it is difficult to for me to say oo. I just don't think they are helping our situation now […] (PLMK 19/06/2018).

Going by the principles of PAR, the research process maintained the idea of 'conflict-free or safe space' (Bergold & Stefan 2012), which allowed participants to be confident that their views will not be used against them, and that they will not suffer any disadvantages if they expressed critical or dissenting opinions. Crucial to this point is that it was not just creating a 'conflict-free space', but rather we ensured that we discussed the conflicts[221] that were revealed in the course of our interaction, which was difficult for some to openly contribute to. We examined what we considered relevant to this research and asked the necessary questions with regard to how these issues could be solved.

Participation in the PAR Process

Drawing from the argument about the PAR approach, the focus for this research was on thinking how differently a group of people can participate in a process that will benefit them. Hence, the advantages of the participatory approach here can be seen essentially in terms of either efficiency or ethics. The two views are not exclusive, and it is perfectly possible to hold that participation is both effective and the right thing to do (Gibson 1996). Thus, the pragmatic argument for participation is that processes which are participatory work better than ones which are not. That is because participatory approaches include participants in decision-making or implementation, they offer a better match with the facts-on-the-ground, as well as a sense of ownership on the part of participants.

The ethical argument is value-driven since it is about respecting participants' rights to influence decisions which affect their lives. Obviously, this is the reason why participants were themselves in agreement with and participated fully in the research process. As Gibson (1996:139) summarised, an ethical view of participation is often associated with an interest in issues of power and empowerment, and a shift is thought from "experts on top to experts on tap".

With regard to participants' participation, it is important to establish from my experience in the research process, that when changes are proposed to existing situations, the effects of those changes are perceived differently by different people; participants had different stakes in the potential outcomes. Thus, a fundamental aspect of this PAR study is that it recognized the differences between different participants in particular contexts. The research acknowledged the perspectives of the youth, women and men; it did not marginalize a particular group from the decision-making process. One crucial point that I did not take for granted is the idea that when dealing with different

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[221] e.g. causes of crisis between communities- cultism as major issue

groups[222] one of the things that distinguishes between them is the different viewpoints they have. Hence, the method I used to understand these different views and interests of participants is participant observation.

Evered and Reis Louis (1981) identified two different paradigms of organizational research - the 'inquiry from the outside', which is detaching from the organizational setting and the 'inquiry from the inside' as personal involvement in the research process. I adopted the "inquiry from the inside" paradigm in order to validate the responses of participants during the interviews. My engagement in the observation exercise exposed me to a valuable experience as regards taking note of people's behaviour, intentions, situations and unscheduled events (De Munck & Sobo 1998). This was my reaction when I first arrived in the field to observe:

> […] the organisational structure of the people [Ogoni] appears to be practically the same as I heard in the interviews. I was actually becoming desperate about my confirmation of these issues, but as I have seen there is a good chance for me to marry the voices of my participants with what I see out there (Observation notes 09/07/2018).

From the quote, it is obvious that the insights were revealing. I was immersed in the Ogoni unfamiliar world, but their peculiar customs and practices communicated something familiar to me; that is, actions that were difficult to grasp during the interview sessions. One of the most striking events at the initial point was the nature of their settlement that suggested something about their collective behaviour that was emphasized by participants. Again, I noted in my observation book:

> Of all the actions I observed, the most frequent activity among the people [Ogoni] was their gathering together at different locations in the communities. This can actually be a typical example of what participants referred to [during the interviews] as living together in peace. Voices are always high [shouting against each other] but have not come across any violent reaction from any of them against each other (Observation notes 11/08/2018).

As my research focus is on Ogoni activism, I looked out for symbolic activities that suggested youth crisis or protest related events that participants reported during the interviews. Unfortunately, there was no opportunity for me to observe any direct action in this regard.

There were indicators of socioeconomic situations of people and differences across the communities that I observed. There were subtle distinctions of socioeconomic status amongst members - the nature of houses[223], clothing and physical characteristics. Though every community appeared to be physically degraded by the carbon monoxide discharged through the gas flaring process, communities with oil wells looked more devastated. I concentrated on this because participants referred so much to the appalling situations of their communities during the interviews.

My survey of the communities confirmed this, but one thing that struck me was that there was farm lands in some communities and it was interesting to see a good number of crops grown. Indeed, my

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[222] In terms of the different communities- within Ogoni- that participants came from
[223] Some more dilapidated than others

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observation revealed what participants said, but it is very important to say that their descriptions were in some cases exaggerated. I noted this in my notebook:

> If I were to go over the interviews again, I would bring up some of these issues with participants. My observation, somehow, has revealed some facts to me, which is good knowledge. There are variations in some of the things that were said during the interviews. I think it is good to know this and I better accept the reality and work with the differences, which may become easier for me especially during the analysis… (Observation notes 20/08/2018).

One of the issues here is that there were numerous truths (Kutsche 1998), particularly as presented from each individual participant's viewpoint. However, the observation process was particularly helpful as it allowed saw not just the tactics used, but how it was impossible to get accurate information from the different sources that were engaged in the interviews.

MOSOP groups

In this research, participants' experiences were interpreted through the juxtaposition of the relationship between myself and the participants. We focused on shared processes of interpretation and knowledge development. We took a critical stance towards the current practice in Ogoni where members of the society are agitating against the effects of oil activities in their land. Thus, participants' stories about their struggle were important. This facilitated their discussions around contextually-relevant solutions to the challenges they encountered in their struggle, for example regarding power relations within the movement and with the government, on how to manage diversity. Thus, participants brought in their knowledge and experience, which formed the basis for analyzing and understanding the current practices in Ogoni. For example:

> De tin wey we dey cal MOSOP, evri pikin wey don bon, de wan wey dem bon bifo, an ivin de wan wey go bon wey im papa from Ogoni, if yur mama from Ogoni an shi mari go ousid, wen yu don bon ousid yu no be MOSOP again. De tin wey dey cal MOSOP na Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People an wen yu don bon insid dis Ogoni, yu be MOSOP. Bot de MOSOP wey we dey tok na naim. We sitdon kom put tins togeda say mek dis pipo cari am, say na yu an yu dey lid, na dem we dey send mesage to Govment Hous, say cari dis wan an dis wan to govment say si wetin Ogoni pipo wan, do dis tin for us. Bot de problem we get tuday be say dose pipo wey we sopot dem kom dey get pipo wey dey anoda side wey be say dem. If yu wan bikom MOSOP now govment don put hand insid. De origina tin wey awa papa Ken Saro-Wiwa tok, say mak Ogoni pipo diman de Bill of Rights, we no dey folo am again bikos Shell as my sister … tok, say Shell don dey divid an rule. E get wetin Shell dey do now. If yu wan bikom MOSOP an Shell an Nigeria no say yu wan tok tru, yu wan stand for tru tin wey papa Ken Saro-Wiwa tok say mak we dimand for awa rit, Shell an Nigerian govment go fyt yu […] (FGPHKKB 12/06/2018).

> Translation:

> What we call MOSOP is inherited by every Ogoni. If your father and mother are from Ogoniland then you are automatically a member of MOSOP. MOSOP is the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People. The MOSOP we belong to is the one that is responsible and that speaks the voice of the people. But the problem now is that the government has high-jacked the movement. The Original MOSOP, which Ken Saro-Wiwa established to demand the recognition of the Ogoni Bill of Rights, is not recognised. This, as my sister said, is caused by Shell's divide and rule tactics. There is one thing now, if anyone (Ogoni) wants to stand for the truth and to continue with our struggle for justice like our father Ken Saro-Wiwa taught us, Shell and the Nigerian government will fight you (see appendix 5 for sample of pidgin English interview).

Interpretation became a process of shared meaning made at all stages of the research process, systematically integrating my insider and outsider perspectives. However, I had to observe some events of the official members of MOSOP as I attended and observed some of MOSOP's meetings and events.

The Researcher as an Instrument of Analysis

My Experience and Perceptions in the Research Process
As I reported in the methodology section, my choice for this research topic was informed by my own personal life story and the desire to maximize meaningful opportunities for the Ogoni to engage in the research process for their own benefit. Thus, my reflection on what actually happened in the research process constitutes a significant part of the analysis. As Sparkes (2002) observes, there is a great pedagogical potential in revealing one's research experiences and reflections. However, the idea is not to facilitate my own understanding and conceptualization of the experiences, but to convey the experiences of participants inherent in the research process.

Like participants, my involvement in the research process defined my role as a participant and teller of my own story (Straus 1993). Apart from this, the reflexes in the field and during interviews, the struggle to understand participants' social world, the transcription of the interviews, the analysis and report are "table-turning" experiences for me. As clearly reflected in the methodology section, my initial anxiety was my major point of concern as I worried about what I would make of my experience in the field. However, the in-depth research process was a major turning point for us - participants and myself- in relation to our understanding of social movement strategy, and how to respond to the government's ongoing political repression and maximize its impact.

From the point of view of utility (Sandelowski 1997) I wanted to know how best I was going to carry out the research, and how more successful I would be if I understand participants' motivations and the potential outcomes of the research. My responsibilities were numerous as well as the challenges; that is, how to manage the risks and at the same time deal with the content of the research. Another important issue I faced was emotional risks (Kindon, et al. 2010) due to the unfamiliar nature of the field since it was a conflict prone environment. To capture these feelings, I had these words recorded in my research journal.

> […] sincerely, my relationship with participants reduces my anxiety and tension as regards the complexity of the local context realities, but I still feel so much heat [tension] within me as I try to unravel the numerous experiences (Reflective journal 01/06/2018).

Evidently, the PAR process facilitated the construction of knowledge with regards to the movement's (MOSOP) strategy moving forward. The PAR democratic approach allowed for

openness and permissiveness, which were necessary for our learning process. However, such dependency or relationships revealed the precariousness and vulnerability not only for (some) participants who may have difficulties controlling the information ultimately generated from the research, but the vulnerability of PAR as a research approach, as well as my vulnerability in the process of learning (MacDonald 2012). I reflect on this to once again highlight the dangers involved in doing a research with a vulnerable group in a vulnerable environment.

My motivation for participating in the research was also altruistic. Apart from the academic benefit, I obtained personal benefits. I got the opportunity to reflect on my own stories and also obtained the skills of telling those stories in a non-judgmental way; an important tool for my pastoral ministry after my study. I now understand the criteria for good qualitative research as ultimately *relational* (Lincoln 2016) or relative to the interests and values of the various knowledge producers and users.

My Influence on the Research Process

At the start of this chapter, I reflected on my own experience and that of the participants and explored the ways in which individual interview practices created unique conversational spaces. From my discovery and depending on the perceived sensitivity of the topic, some were more effective than others in eliciting detailed narratives.

All the same, I see variations more of benefit rather than detracting from the goals of PAR qualitative inquiry. The simple reason is that the entire research process itself was a form of data to be analysed. Thus, my reflections and observations of the process that I recorded as journal entries and the initial informal comments I noted on the transcripts, marked the initial stages of the data analysis. That is, analysis ran concurrently with data collection as indicated above. So, as an instrument of the research, my ongoing reflexivity influenced the direction of the research process (Day 2002; Baum et al. 2006; Bergold & Thomas 2012). This happened both within and between each stage of the process. To this experience, I noted this in my research journal:

> to be honest, I find the interviews interesting. These people [participants] have given me reason to say it is very important to engage people in discussing their issues. I can see a good connection between our interaction with what they say and what I have read before […] (Reflective journal 31/07/2018).

A common pointer to this is how my reflections about some interviews with some participants influenced the nature of questions during the same interviews or in subsequent sessions. The cyclical approach opened up for me how these PAR qualitative experiences and challenges necessitate sustained attention of two interconnected worlds: the world of the participants and my world. The experience allowed me to see the need to develop research skills[224]. The representational

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[224] e.g. the art of listening, negotiating tensions and interweaving multiple realities into telling of the story- see Day 2002

strategy to make explicit my subjectivity and my self-reflexive practices is captured in the brief reflexive excerpts from my own personal journal. They reflect my learning, my thoughts and feelings as I experienced them during the research process.

To a large extent, I made a conscious choice (evident in my use of the reflexive pronoun 'myself') to show how I constructed 'myself' through the use of multiple voices. This is as a result of my philosophical approach of social constructivism with its attendant subjectivity and reflexivity. About the idea with regard to self-constructions, I was a researcher, an animator and author (of my thesis), an observer and participant in the research process. Through contributions from my background of being from minority ethnic group, I exposed glimpses of my self-construction as an oppressed member of society like the participants. In most conventional approaches however, multiple voices such as these are silenced and left out or, at best, implied (Day 2002). In contrast, I brought my multiple constructed self to the research. The incorporation of the different voices into the research presentation, I believe, has not just encouraged or taught us something about the benefits of PAR reflexive approach, but legitimizes the inclusion of a more honest and reflexive sense within this research.

Analysis of PAR Ethics

The focus here is to analyse the ethical considerations that were applied within the context of PAR. To this effect, I discuss five important PAR ethical issues related to the research process: (i) community/village as unit of identity; (ii) the vulnerable and marginalised; (iii) collaboration and equal participation throughout the entire research process; (iv) emergent, flexible, and iterative process; and (v) research process for social action.

In agreement with Price (1996) it is necessary to create guidelines that limit the harm that we may cause to participants. Hence, I considered it an obligation to incorporate an ethic of care since the approach here is PAR. Thus, the obligation was not just about the creation of good or improved conditions through the dissemination of knowledge, but to facilitate active intervention in participant's lives based on the principles of care and concern for collective social conditions. As Stuart (1998) argues, traditional research done in the pursuit of knowledge for the benefit of society is admirable and current codes of ethical conduct offer appropriate guidelines for such adventures. Thus, PAR researchers are obligated to use their power for the direct advantage of individual participants and to incorporate the principles of an ethic of care into the guidelines that they follow for an ethical research journey.

Community/village as unit of Identity

Evidently, community is the primary unit for Ogoni; also, their shared identities that are socially constructed[225], values, norms, and interests (see Carter at al. 2013). This was the reason why PAR was adopted as a methodological approach to explore the knowledge building in order to effect social change through the collective (Healy 2001). To achieve this required capturing and detailing participants' collective identity, problems, issues, strengths, and opportunities, since fostering collective identity can build social cohesion and group capacity.

We must be careful not to allow this approach to achieving unity lead one to the dangers of essentialism and identity politics, whereby a group is ascribed a fixed and myopic identity with presumed core values shared by all its members (Dick 2011). This is problematic because people fail to recognize that identities are socially constructed, and in the face of essentialism, marginalization occurs for those members who may have life experiences that do not reflect those of the wider group. In this way, the quest toward collective identity and unity can potentially impose on or exclude individuals or members disempowering their ability to self-determination and self-identification (Healy 2001).

Thus, Dick (2011:32) suggests adopting an anti-essentialist approach to collective identity, which is contingent, contextually situated and is always in construction. Further, identities "are the product of both assignment and choice; they are something for which affirmation is sought, yet they are also the subject of deconstruction, negotiation, challenge, resistance, and revision". It is why the PAR, democratic process to knowledge building became pertinent. It created the environment that allowed participants to build collective identity and voice within the group.

Collaboration and equal participation throughout the entire research process

From the discussions about the PAR process, participants in this research shared equal responsibilities in relation to decision-making power and ownership of the research. This is a laudable aspect of PAR, but as Connolly (2006) remarks, it is challenging and complex in practice. Without careful consideration of various issues such as power dynamics and relations, resources available, and existing competencies, there is the potential of tokenistic partnerships and "false equalitarianism" (Nygreen 2009) that can emerge and cause harm to individuals and communities

Joanou (2009) defined power dynamics and relations as how power works in a specific context such as who has and who does not have the ability to influence others to negotiate, effect change, and to make decisions. This reality (in the research field) presented a situation where the complexity of power relations between the adults, women and young participants could not be ignored, especially

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[225] E.g. Ogoni-ness, age, gender, ability

at a focus group interviews. Reconciling these issues of power was very difficult for me as a novice researcher. However, I welcomed the sensitivity and understanding of my turmoil as I continuously struggled to construct spaces for myself within the process and the space of each participant irrespective of their age and gender.

Resources available and existing competencies

The research has shown how participants acknowledged inequalities within the Ogoni society, specifically about access to resources, which is fundamental in relation to the inequities participants spoke about. Thus, the oppressive structure established in Ogoni by government distorts the intent of shared responsibility. This can be explained in the context of the constitutional democracy Ken Saro-Wiwa advocated.

However, Morgan et al. (2014) warn that, while participatory research promotes equal relationships, it does not necessarily emphasise equal distribution of power. Thus, discussions about the challenges towards achieving equal relationships are necessary to mitigate the potential harm of exploitative relationships or tokenistic partnerships. Minkler (2004) suggests that the focus should be on equity rather than equality. The shift in terminology is significant in the sense that it implicates an analysis of the prior inequalities and power dynamics at play, which is not only between researchers and participant researchers but also among the participants. Healy (2001) argues that a power-neutral approach may not be ideal. For example, participants may consider some operations of power as useful for maintaining collective cohesion and direction among participants.

However, rather than assuming power-neutral positions, it is better to acknowledge both positive and negative operations of power, to address the negative effects and to facilitate the positive effects. Healy (2001:97) warns that a power averse or power-neutral approach does not make inherent power differences disappear, rather "such recognition is sent underground". Nugus, et al. (2012:1951), affirms Healy's (2001) re-conceptualization of power as such: participatory research needs a concept of politics and power beyond the fixed oppositional categories of empowerment and disempowerment. Power is shifting, not fixed, and a source both of opposition and opportunity. So, power relationships, such as those exposed by research, need constant critical reflection.

Respect for persons

Respect for persons requires that a researcher treats participants with the right to autonomous decision making and protection against abuse. This principle of informed consent was observed during the process. This was done through the provision of the detailed information of the research and participants' response prior to their participation in the research.

However, in PAR, respect for persons goes beyond informed consent (Stuart 1998). This implies that participants will be involved in determining some of the questions, procedures, and the outcomes of the study. This reality was not the case as it was difficult to inform participants prior to the study of what will be done due to the nature of the environment. This, of course, violated the basic tenets of the paradigm. However, I was able to demonstrate that this is the best possible way that will not cause some ill-thinking among participants.

This procedure took place before we engaged the research process and provided information about the consequences of the various procedural choices for the rigour of the research as well as the potential implications for the participants. It was a working relationship based on the articulation of research questions, which was accepted by research participants; a daunting task at the start, because we were only trying to know each other at that point. Another important outcome is capacity building of all participants as collaborators, including the brief training session, control of data collection and storage (Bergold & Thomas 2012). Discussion of all the results with the participants allowed for joint interpretation of the data; modification before analysis was necessary. These steps strengthen the cultural and final validity of the results, minimise harm and ensure autonomy (Stuart 1998).

This is a clear indication that in PAR study, one must avoid unilateral decisions, which may inadvertently be ethnocentric (Indígena & Kothari 1997), and be conscious of the fact that ethical principles espoused by participants in PAR may adopt a different emphasis from those embraced by traditional research (Baum et al. 2006). For example, participants acted in a community context and aspired to work together even though there were divergent views due to the structure of the Ogoni society. It is therefore important that researchers recognise and familiarise themselves with the cultural norms of the communities they study.

Beneficence
By its critically reflective nature PAR is meant to be beneficial to the participants (Kemmis & McTaggart 2005). However, the process can lead to a critical introspection which could be uncomfortable to begin with and it could be a challenge. Also, the process should lead to empowerment which invariably breaks down traditional hierarchies amongst participants. The PAR process revealed the tension that existed between participants especially at focus group discussion sessions where elders and young people and women came together to discuss. Breaking down this cultural hierarchies and gender disparity in any African culture is not easy. I have to say that these benefits and potential risks were difficult to identify in advance, but it is important that I recognised them and made room for benefits of the research to be shared with the participants and potential risks be minimised for all (Lincoln & Guba 1985).

Besides the social outcomes, discussion regarding building of skills for direct action or developing participants' understanding and insights, not otherwise possible, was of major concern. Hence, it was important to ensure that the participants develop within themselves elements of sustainability so that there is continuity and no sense of loss after the research period. However, there is a risk in setting up potentially false expectations such as the possibility of access to resources. The focus of this research is a demand for justice and self-determination of the Ogoni people through the creation of knowledge for strategic action. So it is important to recognise the risk of participants seeing a direct and immediate impact on their oppressed and marginalised situation. Hence, honesty and clarity of communication are important elements in enabling participants to see the research as a long-term goal through empowerment of the Ogoni people in decision making and relevant strategies that will necessitate change.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have given an in-depth analysis of what occurred in the data. I have indicated the measures that I took to analyze the data- through the generation of themes and categorizations of data. Since there is no singular way to analyze data, I used the thematic coding and sorting of data, which mirrors typical qualitative data analysis methods. I demonstrated how my participation influenced the research outcome, and also, have shown how the closeness to the research participants during the research process requires ethically sound decisions about the norms and rules that should apply in social dealings among participants.

The chapter discussed the quality of participants' experiences and how I conceptualized them. I focused specifically on the experiences of participants' engagement in the PAR interviews because it matched the research design. Even though I faced challenges during the research process, the qualitative methods within a PAR approach allowed me to discuss, reflect and learn from the research participants, resulting in broadened perspectives within the scope of this research.

Chapter 5: Research Findings

Introduction

In chapter 4 section 3, I discussed the process of data analysis and how themes were generated. The key themes that emerged from the data analysis were: Social relationships: Ogoni source of mobilization; political and economic marginalization of Ogoni; divide and rule: a repressive tactic against Ogoni; structural violence; MOSOP: articulation of Ogoni grievances; freedom and development.

In this chapter, I discuss the six key research themes mentioned above, focusing specifically on the ways in which participants constructed the discourses under investigation. The chapter discusses participants' views on why they engage in acts of resistance as means to changing their marginalized, oppressive situation. Since the focus of this chapter is on participants' contributions, the chapter provides a possible explanatory factor that influence why and how participants responded to the research questions; it begins with participants' understanding of resistance as means to justice.

Participants' Understanding of Resistance as a means to Justice

As discussed in previous chapters, this is a PAR study and so it involved Ogoni elders, youth, women, graduates and MOSOP officials[226] for the sake of transforming their social world. Their construction of justice stemmed from their subjective experiences of marginalisation and oppression for over six decades, their suppression by the government and exploitation of their environment by the Shell Oil company.

Through the lens of PAR, participants critically reflected on their lived experiences from the point of view of domination and oppression by the state. From their reflections, participants were able to construct their idea of justice as 'fair treatment of Ogoni', which is to allow Ogoni an equal share of oil proceeds that is generated from their land. Fairness that gives the Ogoni people power over their resources and their recognition as a people in the country. From the point of view of global grassroots movements for social justice, the Ogoni struggle is to create a safe socio-economic and political justice system[227] for themselves.

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[226] Official means executive leaders of MOSOP- and all these groups form the different constituencies of MOSOP- see MOSOP subgroups in chapter 1.
[227] See Agartan 2014; Lawrence & Churn 2012.

Through their experiences and the manner in which they articulate them, one can argue that participants empower themselves as regards their capacity to change their current oppressive situation, a crucial point for a social movement. Relying on the discussion on social change in the literature review, it is accurate to say the important element in their struggle to overcome marginalization and oppression is the idea of active resistance. Confronting their complex world and to derive meaning from the plethora of conflicts and complexities within which their society is ensnared, participants discussed how to achieve a situation that reflects a practice of justice and equality. This is illustrated in the following extracts:

> … if we want change, there is no other way we can get it or celebrate it if we don't have our plan [strategy]. For me, I don't believe in war… we need the government to treat us well [fairly] so that our life [lives] will be better… (PMSG 19.05.2018).

> we the Ogoni people cannot surrender our right to anyone; we must stand up for our right. There is nothing we can do now more than fighting for our good (PLDBK 12.06.2018).

Through their engagement in the research process, participants sustained the idea that it is possible to challenge what they perceived to be discriminatory and oppressive practices against them. Although participants claimed that Ogoni society lived out its values of equality, my interaction with them revealed that though the Ogonis are entitled to be treated with equality and fairness as of right, there was evidence of unequal treatment[228] of some members within Ogoni society. This, I think, is critical as regards their achievement of justice that can have a transformative, emancipatory effect on the lives of every Ogoni person.

Considering participants' presentation of Ogoni social values as regards equality and fairness, the above idea of unequal treatment of some members within Ogoni society is contradictory. However, I agree with Neocosmos' (2016) argument on emancipatory politics which provides an understanding as regards the contradiction. As a point of departure, he stressed that politics is about thinking/thought, and to be emancipatory, it must be collective, and it must be related to our doing- "politics is a collective thought practice." Further, he observed that, "whereas academics may be able to detach themselves from a political practice, activists cannot fully avoid the contradictions between subjectivities as expressions of place and their excess: their 'expressions of place' because all rebellion is socially located, and 'excessive thought' because it sometimes consciously outstrips its location. It is only through gradually resolving these contradictions on a continuous basis that a process of politicization and emancipation can be sustained" (Neocosmos 2016: xxv).

Considering the Ogoni context, it is important to recognize that social change must emerge from the interplay between human agency and systemic structures (Habermas 1987). Clearly, participatory strategies are not empowering if they are conducted within the confines of predetermined systemic

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[228] Societal barriers such as marginalisation of women.

order. In addition, empowerment-oriented interventions are not emancipatory if the concept of social change begins and ends with the behaviours of program participants. Hence, if social change requires interaction between human agency and social structures as argued by Habermas (1987), evaluation strategies that ignore this and focus only on the program user have little capacity to inform an emancipatory interest.

In the subsequent sections, I discuss the six research themes that emerged from the data analysis and demonstrate the manner in which participants were enabled to contextualize their experiences of marginalization and oppression with a view to resisting them.

Social Relationships: Ogoni source of mobilization

Culture was a dominant factor that participants used to construct meaning about their current social reality. That is, experiences of participants were drawn mostly from the interpretation of their socio-cultural background, the experience of their social reality both past and present perceived as individuals or as a group. This means that the Ogoni socio-cultural world helped participants to put in context their experiences of marginalization. Based on Ken Saro-Wiwa's projection of the Ogoni socio-cultural condition to establish the Ogoni struggle (Saro-Wiwa 1992) it is no wonder that participants considered their culture as unique and a starting point for understanding their current action in relation to their search for justice. This established sense of belonging was highlighted by an elderly participant:

> … in fact, Ogoni was the most organized society. We used to see ourselves as one of the most organized societies, you know… Due to our culture, there was law and order in the communities, you know, the smallest parts of our communities there was orderliness. You can't misbehave… you know, you don't go outside the order of the authority of the communities. We were unique and everybody knew the Ogonis to be good people. …before the advent of Shell and all this crisis… We had a far more organized society. Our people were very organized people, well organized societies. Our communities were intact and our parents told [taught] us many good things (PYKT 23.04.2018).

Another elder supported with specific reference to their family and occupational life:

> before this time, I know quite well that before this time, our forefathers lived in unity and there was a very great cordiality [cordial relationship] among them to the extent that they were able to stay together in a place [community]. We didn't joke with our family life. They fished together, farmed together without any crisis and they were the kind of people that loved themselves in a way that during cultural activities … they interacted with everything and participated in everything that involved everybody. (PVFVL 05.06.2018).

It is clear from the excerpts that participants' description of their cultural background before oil exploration is a conscious effort that results from their understanding of what is necessary to achieve in terms of their current relationships among themselves and their relationship with their oppressors. This is significant with regards to bringing the Ogoni people together to challenge the government.

If, however, it is clear that social relationships are important factors for Ogoni mobilization, it remains unclear why some individuals go against the Ogoni norm to engage in violent activities while others do not. Hence, it is important to study individuals who engaged in violent activities alongside controlled individuals who advocated nonviolent tactics. As I mentioned in chapter 4, however, it was not possible (due to restricted access) to obtain data from the 'cultists' groups which engage in violent activities. Nevertheless, the research findings show how the majority of participants were convinced about the legitimacy of using nonviolent means to seek justice[229].

Participants recognized that Ogoni society was highly organized and quite hierarchical. Though they had heads of communities and the paramount chief, the most significant thing about their traditional setting is that the hierarchical structure starts with the family. However, members were loyal to the paramount ruler, who enforced checks and balances in the society with his council. In one of the focus group discussions, one middle aged man comments:

> ...we run [ran] a very democratic system of governance where we have a chief, a royal king in council. Then the council is constituted of representatives of the different dynasties in the community. This organisation is from the top to the last person in the family. This present situation [land disaster] has disorganise [ed] us. I wouldn't lie to you; there is serious breakdown in our [Ogoni] system. Our culture is like, dead; our traditional leaders are weak and it is affecting us seriously (FGPSPP 07.05.2018).

Another middle aged participant supported this:

> All these stories you hear about our culture are true. But I think we [Ogoni] have missed our road. This Shell issue [oil exploration] has caused a lot of damage to everything in Ogoniland. The reason why they [government and Shell] don't want to allow us to manage ourselves [resources] is that they know that we are united people and we can do very well if we have no problem in the land. I think we must fight for it to bring back our good culture (FGPAAY 02.06.2018)

From the excerpts, it is true that participants acknowledged the importance of their culture, and the influence it had on their struggle. However, the above expressions also convey a clear observation and understanding of the prevailing political conditions that the Ogoni struggle face. This is a direct acknowledgment that the Ogoni socio-cultural structure[230] has been violated by the activities of government and Shell. Obviously, participants expressed their unhappiness concerning the current situation and the need to remain rooted in their struggle against the forces that dominate and that hinder their society from exercising their rights and freedom. Though we cannot raise questions in relation to participants' presentation of their culture as perfect before oil activities in Ogoniland, their construction of themselves and their culture[231] and environment as a powerful reference point cannot be ignored.

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[229] See Stephen & Chenoweth 2008.
[230] See OBR 1990
[231] An idea that was used by Ken Saro-Wiwa who saw the importance of mobilising every Ogoni person based on the necessity of their unity in terms of their culture, language heritage and the importance of cooperating with one another on the Ogoni agenda- see Saro-Wiwa 1995a.

It must be said, therefore, that participants see their culture as a dominant attribute that is used as part of everyday conversation and it informs how they construct their ideas in relation to their struggle for survival. On the other hand, participants' emphasis on their socio-cultural background can be attributed to historical systems of their marginalization and oppression as Ogoni; developed as a result of their perception of exploitation.

Transgenerational stories and resilience: we are Ogoni.
Another dominant discourse that the research established is how the Ogoni past stories have influenced their present struggle. Today, as participants observed, their life story is, in fact, the greater choice they have as regards their understanding of the social reality both past and present. They consider it a premise that places them in a better position to respond to the current social, economic and political realities they experience. Thus, their constant reference to the Ogoni past, e.g. "from what we hear…"; from what our forefathers told us…", highlighted their capacity to talk regarding their vulnerable position and to build resilience in terms of what they hope to achieve from their struggle.

It is pertinent, therefore, that the past Ogoni stories contextualized[232] for participants the current events in their land, allowing them to reflect on the concepts of identity and inclusion. It unmasks the structures of oppression, injustice and existing violence in Ogoniland. As previously alluded, the narrative of their connection with the past reveals the fact that even though participants, especially the youth had no experiential knowledge of the past, they are able to tell the story of how things happened such that the events of the past are familiar to them, and are helping them shape their current worldview. Young participants felt the stories are a great resource that will facilitate a synergy among them to fight for justice. Two young participants in one of the focus group discussions told their stories:

> Now that I know about our Ogoni society in the past, it is painful when I see what is happening now. If we [youth] look at our condition now and then, remember what our elders say about the past, the difference is clear…. We cannot leave things to continue like this. Maybe if nothing is done, our own children will not even hear any story… (FGPALK, 11.06.2018).

> … this government think we are fools. Even though we are young, we know the history of our land. Like me, I have read a lot about Ken [Saro-Wiwa], and I know about Ogoni society in the past. Our beautiful land cannot be destroyed just like that. We will fight for our right [s] and the government must listen to us… (FGPEJK, 11.06.2018).

Another youth reiterates:

> It is important to know that the plan of our government and Shell is to make us powerless through military force. They have the power to oppress us. They have destroyed our land and our culture but nobody can kill our Ogoni spirit. The spirit of our ancestors [Ken Saro-Wiwa] will help us take back our land. We will conquer them (PFTDGG, 02.05.2018).

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[232] See Stone-Mediatore 2003

One youth expands this and says:

> "…I don't think this is a way to label people for a lifetime. You can go and read anywhere- we are not violent people. Shell and the Government create all these crises in our land. We are peaceful people and as our elders will always tell us, our society was peaceful. We just need to be united among us and we will achieve success (PCON, 07.05.2018).

In the above texts, it is clear that these young participants based their arguments on the narrative of the past, which, as mentioned before, showed how the two moments (past and present) are not the same, a unique way to highlight the context of the Ogoni agenda. Their expressions rightly point to the strategy adopted by Ken Saro-Wiwa, which is to project Ogoni as a distinct group within Nigeria in order to attract the attention of the state to their marginalized and neglected condition, through these narratives (Okonta 2008). These findings offer an explanation in relation to how the Ogoni people construct conflict and the way they react to it as compared to other groups in the Niger Delta.

From the foregoing discussion, it is obvious that we cannot undermine the power of these stories because they provide a more informed perspective in terms of how the Ogoni participants constructed a view on how, as a 'community', they can deal with their present situation. What is clear from participants' narrative is that Ogoni socio-cultural life and their land cannot be separated, therefore, anything that violates their culture and land is not taken for granted. Therefore, they struggle to save themselves and their land from exploitation through nonviolent means. This idea, I think, shows how participants' engagement with the Ogoni past as developed by Ken Saro-Wiwa remains the most crucial tool for their struggle going forward.

Ogoni Collective Identity - Ogoni Consciousness
As examined in chapter 2, Nigeria is a pluralist society which comprises different ethnic and religious groups that compete not only for resources within the political landscape but also for the assertion of their various identities. This, as discussed throughout the thesis, has been at the heart of the Ogoni struggle. The Ogonis more than any other ethnic group in Nigeria, have ethically and consciously agitated for their human rights and self-determination[233]. The persistent struggle for power and influence, and the protection of ethnic and sectional interests by the selfish political elites, and formulation of policies and laws, undisputedly favours the majority groups and denies the minorities a sense of belonging.

It appears to be more obvious that a group tends to assert its identity when, in most cases, there is an oppressive mechanism, usually in the form of a political structure, designed to oppress,

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[233] Self-determination as explained earlier is not identified with political separatisms, but understood in this context of Ogoni as their struggle is essential for reaching their objectives, which is control over their own life and resources within Nigeria.

subjugate, exploit, and relegate it to the background (Osaghae and Suberu 2005; Nnoli 1978). Young (1990) captures this in a more succinct way when he says that identity politics[234], as a mode of organizing, is closely connected to the idea that some social groups are oppressed. It can be seen therefore as the politics of a group based movement claiming to represent the interests and identity of a particular group, rather than policy issues relating to all. Speaking from the said context, participants established how the Ogonis regard themselves as perpetual clients of other ethnic groups in the Nigerian society. One middle aged participant illuminates:

> We the Ogoni people are unique. If you read our history, you will know that we are not colonised at all. We just find ourselves in this Nigeria. But, we were living together peacefully, we shared whatever we have together without having any grudge in mind against our brothers not until our late leader, Ken Saro-Wiwa, came up to reorganise the entire Ogoni society, and Niger Delta communities concerning our own resources that have been taken from us decades of years without compensation. Since then, we began to know what we have been losing since all this while, and then crisis began to come in, in the sense that the federal government of this country they neglected this particular side of the country [Ogoni] (PNSKM 09.05.2018).

Another middle-aged participant reiterated:

> Let me add something to what my brother has said. […] Is it because of the oil that we have lost everything? These crises we [participants] are talking about today, it is because our youth are frustrated. Some of them don't even know exactly what they are doing. I agree with my brother that we have been neglected by the country (PKFGM 04.05.2018).

The quotes above explain how the Ogoni view the Nigerian state and their position as regards their interest in the political arena against the oppressive nature of the state. Linking this to the discussion in chapter 2, in a situation where some groups seek to dominate other groups, there is constant struggle by the oppressed groups to free themselves from the clutches of oppression. The Ogoni case, as pointed out by the participants, is largely a struggle against structural imbalances expressed in the unequal composition of the state and the unfair distribution of resources.

Evidently, Ogoni as an ethnic group within Nigeria demand a sense of belonging, freedom and self-determination (see OBR 1990). This is illustrated in the quotes from two young MOSOP participants below:

> … come to think of it, there is nowhere else to go. Sometimes I feel like crying. Nigeria has not been fair to us [Ogoni]; we have been relegated to the background; we have been humiliated. Many people [Nigerians], especially those in the North, see us as sub humans; as slaves. Our oil is the wealth of this country, yet we are like slaves in our own land. But I promise you, we will continue to fight for our rights [self-determination]. There is no need to fear because we are dead already… Ken [Saro-Wiwa] died because he wanted to gain freedom for us, we must finish the work he started (PVGK 01.06.2018).

> To be honest, the destruction of our land and the killing of our people are unbearable. How can we say we are part of this country when nobody cares about us [Ogoni]? As you yourself can see, we are no longer afraid of any government. Though our movement [MOSOP] has been weakened but the fact is that until we get justice from the government and Shell, the fight continues (FGPUHPK 11.06.2018).

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[234] Ethnicism and sectionalism in this context

The above accounts highlight, first of all, the activities of the postcolonial Nigerian state in Ogoniland, which according to participants is a deliberate strategy to dominate and oppress, and then, the articulation of their knowledge of their social reality. This signals a strong feeling of the Ogoni, which suggest a path to be chartered toward getting attention to their cause, which is to seek justice without violence.

Their expressions also suggest the idea of social cohesion, which stem from their relationship with their culture because it gives them a sense of belonging and creates an awareness of how their distinct socio-cultural value system is significant in the life of every Ogoni. The common phrase "*we are Ogoni people*" communicates their shared values, beliefs, attributes and customs that informs their perception of the world around them. The individual and collective experiences shared during the research process are enough evidence to argue there is an Ogoni solidarity which is the life force of their movement. One middle aged member of MOSOP said this:

> From our traditional background, you can see that we have a strong community spirit… we live together… We respect our local traditions, very well. So, it is easy for us to resolve crisis within ourselves. We have the traditional means of resolving it. The truth is that if we maintain our tradition, nobody can defeat us in this fight to take back our land (FGPMGP, 07/05/2018).

From their socio-cultural position, most participants firmly believed that the Ogoni society was devoid of corruption. In this context, it is important to examine Scott's (1985) *Weapons of the weak…* argument. Scott argued that oppression and resistance are in constant flux, and by focusing on visible historic events like organized rebellions or collective action, one can easily miss subtle but powerful forms of 'everyday resistance'. He explored this by looking at peasant and slave societies and their ways of responding to domination, with a focus not on observable acts of rebellion but on forms of cultural resistance and non-cooperation that are employed over time through the course of persistent servitude.

His research reveals how overt peasant rebellions are actually rather uncommon, and often they do not have much impact. Rather than seeing 'resistance as organization', he focused on the less visible, every-day forms of resistance such as foot-dragging, evasion, false compliance, feigned ignorance, etc.[235] This, according to him, is found particularly among rural people who are physically dispersed and less politically organized than urban populations.

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[235] Further on the idea of resistance, Scott also used the notion of 'transcripts' (hidden and public) which he argued are established ways of behaving and speaking that fit particular actors in particular social settings, whether dominant or oppressed. Resistance, he says, is a subtle form of contesting 'public transcripts'. That is, making use of prescribed roles and language (e.g. rumour, gossip, disguises, linguistic tricks, metaphors, euphemisms, folktales, ritual gestures, anonymity) to resist the abuse of power. These methods are particularly effective in situations where violence is used to maintain the status quo, allowing a veiled discourse of dignity and self-assertion within the public transcript where ideological resistance is disguised, muted and veiled for the purpose of safety. These forms of resistance require little coordination or planning, and are used by both individuals and groups to resist without directly confronting or challenging elite norms. (See Scott 1985:137).

In light of the above, one can argue that the Ogoni culture, in all its ramifications, has a lot to account for in the social, intellectual and emotional make-up of the Ogoni personality. It does not only govern the behaviour of the individuals, but of the group who must preserve their cultural heritage in all aspects of life. Interesting to note also is that those who live a good lifestyle are rewarded while those who go contrary to the social norm are punished. For example, the concept of "vultures" emerged in the Ogoni society and was used on people who betray any trust reposed in them.

This fits into Thompson's (1991) description of the conservative characteristic of customs in common - how people enforced what appealed to them from their tradition. He gave an example of the ritualised shaming of offenders against community norms in "rough music", commonly exercised against those who transgressed moral and sexual boundaries[236]. It was also a form of disapproval which could be turned against blackleg labour, Methodist itinerants, radicals, or even against the authorities or their agents.

The Ogonis believe there are the patriots and the sell-outs who are referred to as "vultures". Mostly, the elites who are empowered by political money to betray the united force that is bent on getting justice for the entire Ogoni society are the "vultures". Recalling the Giokoo incident[237] that led to the arrest and killing of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogonis, a young participant said:

> … they took that bold step as a punishment to serve as an example to whoever was on that side [deviants], that are siding those people or the followers of those people not to attempt to make such thing again. So, to me, I see it to be a defensive mechanics of the Ogoni tradition. They're [elders] trying to build a tradition of discipline. A foundation of oneness that if we are focusing on one thing, let there be no betrayers, let everybody focus on that thing, else there will be a penalty, which might be a penalty of death or punishment. So, I termed the whole thing to be anchored on traditional routines that caused the death of the four people. Ogoni people sentenced them to death based on the intensity of the MOSOP struggle (FGPKDM 05/06/2018).

However, another youth disagreed:

> I can say that the elders [deviants] did not do the right thing, but it is not good the way they treated them. I think we don't even know who did it [killing], but I don't think that is our culture. I know many people don't agree with you [participant above], because this action can destroy our unity (FGPFDFP 07.05.2028).

This, like Thompson's (1972) concept of *moral economy,* established the notion of exchange between people and elites, supported by norms of reciprocity and the right to subsistence included in daily routines. It is a model of protest, political culture and relations between elites and the dominated, and provides the link between popular expectations and the patronage of authorities, where the latter are expected to provide for the needs of the former and where popular expectations

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[236] Usual targets of this practice were unmarried or adulterous couples, violent husbands, the sexually deviant or domineering women.
[237] Discussed in chapter 1

are indeed, indebted to a paternalistic and protective model, wherein authorities are obliged to provide these services.

There was always the possibility of popular intimidation of the representatives of authority who did not conform to a model grounded in the idea of traditional rights. Obviously, the situation of domination defines the parameters of what is acceptable. One can argue, therefore, that the idea of "vultures" in Ogoniland grew out of a powerful sense of collective moral outrage of Ogoni struggle. Arguably, this could be a negative approach to sociology, but as the case may be in other African societies, these social norms are necessary for social cohesion and interaction and without them, we would live in a chaotic, unstable, unpredictable society.

In their piece about nineteenth and twentieth century British "traditions", Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) argued that these are sets of practices, normally governed by tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, that seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. Obviously, any social practice that needs to be carried out repeatedly will tend, for convenience and efficiency, to develop a set of such conventions and routines, which may be *de facto* or *de jure* formalized for the purposes of imparting the practice to new practitioners.

Although these *Invented Traditions* are often used by elites to manipulate the powerless, they are also used by a number of different institutions to maintain social unity and to prevent themselves from falling apart due to the challenges of rapid social change. The culture of oppression has led to the invention of a new cultural approach for the sake of social cohesion. One can argue, therefore, that the Ogoni society and people have experienced a change in their social patterns, beliefs and values. Their conception of the present social reality has forced them to make radical choices, which they themselves saw as contrary to their social norms.

It is important to conclude that Ogoni socio-cultural values are fundamental and they are the forces that regulate the lives of the people. They are of fundamental importance across a wide range of social interaction throughout the six kingdoms. Not mentioned by participants during the interview process but worth noting that the idea they expressed finds resonance with the notion of *Ban-Ogoi* (special unit), which make up the Ogoni indigenous nation. The major point from the findings above is that the Ogoni socio-cultural life enhances the maintenance of peaceful co-existence and societal integration, harmonious interactions and mutual strengthening. However, the increasing

rate of criminal activities[238] in the modern Ogoni society is in sharp contrast to the "good old days", when traditional measures were used in controlling crime.[239]

Political and Economic Marginalization of Ogoni

As established in previous chapters, despite the discovery of oil and decades of oil production in Ogoni, with hundreds of billions of dollars of oil revenue accrued by the government (Ekine 2001), poverty remains a crisis of everyday life in Ogoniland. As participants argued above, the multinational oil companies as propped up by the government has treated the environment and the inhabitants with contempt and hostility (Okonta & Douglas 2003). This is illustrated by a young graduate participant:

> The Ogoni situation is a clear sign that our government has betrayed us. I can tell you, there is no law and order with Ogoni issue. This is a violation of our rights because we are a minority group, but let me say to you [researcher] that our effort [struggle] will definitely change the situation (PMPDG 7.05.2018)

Amidst the difficult situation, it is clear that the Ogoni people are united in anger against the Federal government that violates their basic human rights such as social, economic and political rights. This speaks directly to the claim that the Ogoni people have been structurally and politically marginalized. This is expanded in subsequent sections below.

Post-Colonial politics

In chapter 2, I discussed the reason why Nigeria's action against minority ethnic groups in the country, and how the alien structure established by the colonial power is pursued by the postcolonial state. Within the structure-Nigeria, the Ogoni have agitated against being dominated by not just the Federal power, but internal agencies[240], mostly from the point of view of economic inequalities. As explained by two middle aged official members of MOSOP:

> The issue in our land is multi-dimensional. It is not just the government from above… even here in the state we still have issues with the other ethnic groups. As you know, political influence things [lobby for their ethnic group], and since we are not allowed to occupy political offices, the other groups in the state also look down on us, and they deny us our rights too (PMAPN 04.06.2018).

Two middle aged participants said:

> … Ogoni sons and daughters don't have much opportunity [socio-economic and political inequalities] … So, it affects us a lot" (PNSKM 09.05.2018).

> … [government] wants the oil money and because the Ogoni people are powerless, there is nothing for us. There is really trouble in Ogoni… (FGPFDFP 07.05.2018).

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[238] Perpetrated by the bad boys- cultists, as reported by participants
[239] Participants made reference to the *yira-yii* (oath-taking). As established in chapter 1, religion is one of Ogonis most important sociocultural values, hence, their belief in the ability of the gods to give impartial judgment has been the bedrock of *yira-yii* (oath-taking) among the Ogoni. Not only are the gods presumed to be custodians of morality, and up-holders of truth and honesty, but they are also believed to act decisively in acquitting the innocent and condemning the guilty. As such, the Ogoni concept of *yira-yii* (oath-taking) among the Ogoni people amplifies the sacredness of divine order.
[240] Other ethnic groups

In support of the assertions above, for almost all minority ethnic groups in the country, the internal oppressive structure remains a valid point that defines the state of affairs since independence. The most important point raised in the text is the levels that this domestic domination and oppression is carried out; both by the Federal government through the core dominant groups[241], and also by some minority groups, with the state against others. Evidently, ethno-nationalism is a major contributing factor to conflict about control of state power, citizenship issues, unequal allocation of resources, regional or state legitimacy, democratization and national cohesion (Osaghae & Suberu 2005).

Oppression against Ogoni Women
As an African, I am proud of my African culture and tradition. However, we can agree that some of our cultural and traditional beliefs facilitate oppression and marginalization of women. This is exercised in the context of gender discrimination, which according to Hamber and Palmarym (2009) is rooted in our culture and seen as a norm in the society. On the same note, Collins (2000) elucidates that women experience oppression from the cultural and traditional settings as well as through the formal organizations that are controlled by men. In sometimes frustrating ways, women felt the difficulties of being women, due to the gender discriminatory practices that have had considerable impact on gender imbalance in their life. Hence, patriarchy is a reality that has been inscribed in the minds, souls and bodies of these women. This is illustrated by one young female participant:

> …women are seen as lower people [subordinate] than [to] men. This is happening here [Ogoni] too, and they want us to marry and be doing the house work. They [men] don't allow us to go to school too… we are not free (FGPIB 13.07.2018).

It is interesting that during the interviews, women participants constantly used the words 'free'. It reveals something about the condition of Ogoni women[242], who are critical about their socio-cultural, political and economic situations, which are justified by comments such as:

> … we cannot change our tradition. This is what our fathers taught us and I don't see any problem with it (PFTDGG 02.05.2018).

This is a clear example of the culture of women's suppression in Ogoni, and it reveals the extent to which they are marginalized and excluded from the Ogoni social and political life. However, most women participants recognized the need to overcome the traditional structure (male superiority) that suppresses women. A middle aged female participant said this:

> … normally women are always the liberal type. We don't talk…, our noise is at the background, we hardly confront our challenges…. It is a cultural trend in Nigeria. Not until we heard of the Aba Women's Riot of 1923 before we got to know about women's reaction to issues. So, it's cultural in Nigeria (PPIK 05.04.2018).

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[241] Hausa-Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba- see chapter 1 & 2
[242] Though not limited to Ogoni women but, arguably, a pattern in many African societies

It is interesting to see how these women were able to identify the causes of their being oppressed, and their capacity in terms of how they were able to reflect critically about the structures of inequalities against them. Their action especially their power to reflect on women's resistance in the past, reveals how they have taken it upon themselves to seek emancipation.

Cultural and Institutional Structures of Oppression

As a major issue of concern, women participants identified two dimensions of oppression experienced by Ogoni women: cultural oppression - socio-cultural belief as the foundational structure of inequality - and institutional oppression, which is the power imbalance created by government. Indeed, when values and beliefs embedded in social representations endorse one group as superior to another[243] the outcome is exclusion of the vulnerable group. As observed by the majority of women participants, these factors have weakened the Ogoni women from the point of view of not being fully integrated into the struggle for social change. One middle aged female participant observed:

> To be honest, women participation is limited. […] I feel sad… because women are in the minority. But it is better now. We can now speak about these issues and like this meeting [interview session] is another eye-opener for us to talk about lack of gender equality in Ogoni (PPIK 05.04.2018).

Also,

> The same thing just as in politics as in MOSOP. In politics women are not allowed even to be given chance and in MOSOP, I have not heard a woman being a president or occupy a higher seat. So, the women are being marginalized (FGPLMB 09.06.2018).

From the above quotations, it is difficult to argue against the idea that Ogoni women are doubly marginalized. From their account, the Ogoni cultural institutional norms support inequalities. Thus, women are not allowed to participate in social events and be part or participate in the social-political structures in the society, their identity, participation and recognition in all spheres of Ogoni life are major issues of concern. To put this into perspective, one young female participant said: "… that is a big bondage on women in Ogoniland generally" (FGPBSUB 09.06.2019). This highlights the idea of patriarchy, which, according to participants, facilitates oppression of women in Ogoniland. Below are numerous accounts from middle aged women participants:

> …regarding… culture in Ogoniland, as I know women particularly, were like being cheated. Reason being that in Ogoniland before this time, if you happen to be a first daughter of a family, you were not allowed to marry. …if you happen to get married and you lost your husband, you will not even be allowed to remarry and these have been something that do not augur well. It's out of the culture, it's not very good. I think this type of culture should be changed in order to let our women free in certain aspects because you see a man who marries today and he happens to lose his wife and the man goes on with life, gets married and begets children. You [woman] become a tool in the hands of other men and this type of culture breeds prostitution, which is very, very unfair. So, such culture should be changed. The same

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[243] See Nelson & Prilletensky 2012

thing just as in politics, as in MOSOP. In politics women are not allowed even to be given chance and in MOSOP, we have not heard a woman being a president or occupy a higher seat. So, the women are being marginalized (FGPLMB 09/06/2018).

Just as what my colleague was saying, in the olden days, our parents did not train female child. They believed that you will go and marry so there is no need for them to train that female child. They believed in training the men. Even in the area of property, when you get married, no matter the poor man you're married to, they don't believe in supporting the female [child]. They even abandon the female as if they're not a child. All their attention was focused on the men. Even their property was for the male. They will train them in school but the female child, nothing for them. No property, no support from the parents, they just leave you as if you're not part of what is going on (FGPBPB 09.06.2019).

There are so many things that they [men] are doing that are not right. For example, town square meetings are different from going to solve dispute with another person in the community. Women are not involved in the settlement of disputes. Mostly, it's the boys. You hardly see the women because from the look of things, just as I mentioned to you that in settling peace in Ogoniland and going to the palace of the highness, women are not involved (PPIK 05.04.2018).

A young participant supported this:

… before, women are seen, let me use my mother as an instance, my mum while she grew up, she grew up in the midst of other boys…, till now, she doesn't have any sister. She was the only girl. They never allowed her to go school because they feel women, you don't need [to] train women in school, reason being that very soon they will say very soon she will marry and leave the house so what's the need training them in school. So, she did not have that opportunity of going to school (FGPEKB-D 21.04.2018).

Reflecting on the formal social institution controlled by men, another young female participant remarked:

… when the MOSOP leader, as in the president and the group are talking on radio, we hear them, we don't hear the voice of the female at all as if the female are abandoned. …as if they're just working for themselves and not the women. We supposed to have the leader of the women in that group of MOSOP that will always call the Ogoni women around, look at what our men are saying, look what is going on now, to bring them up and to tell them to be calm that good things or bad things are coming. Women are not there, only the men. They feel that women are not part of the community, I don't know whether we are not part of the Nigerian people; I don't know, whether we are not part of what is going on, I don't know. So, everywhere we are left alone (FGPBPB 09.06.2019).

When asked what the present position of Ogoni women is, two middle aged women participants noted:

There are many differences now: the difference is that our parents have now know [n] and realised that it's good to train a female child. They see the female child, as in, when they're old, the female child takes care of them more than the man. Because the men, when they get married, they forget about the parents. But the female understand that as you get married if my female child has money, she will give me food to eat when I am old. They are now putting more efforts in training a female child. Between the male and female, sometimes, in the studies, we are brilliant than the men in this Bodo now and we are trying to do what men can do even better.... So, that is the thing (FGPBPB 09.06.2019).

… I think we need to try do something if you try you get a way forward. Women have not actually come together to confront this issue. So, I am of the opinion that women should come together to confront certain issues to pave way for the young girls since our men are trying to understand now (FGPLMB 09.06.2019).

Every society has its own complex set of expectations of men and women in a given culture. As a core common pattern, cultures tend to have very clear sets of rules concerning who has a right and

who has not. Highly visible realities exposed by participants above have shown how the Ogoni culture has enabled marginalization of women. The good thing and that which is related to this research is that the Ogoni women have discovered the importance of talking about their social reality in their bid to resist oppression. It should be said, therefore, that the reaction of these women participants emphasises the importance of voice (which is crucial to PAR), which makes them assume the role of social actors as they interpret events and conditions of their lives in their subjective meaning expressed in the stories[244].

Oppression of women from the institutional point of view is established by oil activities. From participants' point of view, traditionally, when an Ogoni woman got married, her husband gave her a piece of land to farm as it was the norm - this was confirmed by male participants. It is from this farm that she fed her family and cultivated food for sale in order to buy other staples. The common impression from the women participants was that this tradition allowed women to enjoy some form of independence. From the stories of older women, it is clear that oil activities have contributed to the present situation of women. Thus:

> The oil work [activities] has killed [destroyed] everything in our place [Ogoni society]. We cannot get food from our farm again. As you see me, I can catch many fish when I go to the river but we cannot get fish again because of Shell…the people who suffer more [most] are the women; from all the bad things [poverty and violence] We cannot leave [abandon] our children to travel like our men. … our life has change [changed]… (PFJSB 04.05.2020).

> the Ogoni society is facing serious problem, but our [women] own problems are more. Look at the issue of oil and other things that the men are doing in the land, we don't know anything about it. But the good thing now is that our girls are allowed to go to school and from there we know that things will be ok. We must begin to talk about our women issue first then we go on to talk about the other issue that is affecting all of us (FGPBSUB 09/06/2018).

Evidently, oil exploitation and the resulting pollution of Ogoni land and water has impoverished Ogoni women, and subsequently, the community. No doubt this has given rise to tensions in the home and community. Although the Ogoni women have suffered spectacular cultural and physical violence[245] against them, their courage to challenge their situation as the findings have shown, means the experience has not deterred them from bringing their ideas to fit into the entire Ogoni struggle for justice.

When these women were asked about the possible solutions to their problems, they articulated practical ideas as regards resolving the issues. One of the key approaches they identified was participation and mobilization; to acknowledge the skills and knowledge of Ogoni women who will contribute to the collective effort that will bring change to the entire Ogoni society. They argued that the elimination of cultural discrimination automatically takes care of the economic and political oppressive structure they are suffering from. Their assessment holds that a shift from the

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[244] For more insight see Collins 2000 on the politics of empowerment.
[245] Especially from military violation of Ogoni human rights.

institutional oppressive structure will create an internal model that will allow Ogoni women participate fully in the Ogoni fight for justice.

Fraser's (2005) theory of parity of participation captures this so well. The pattern of cultural values must provide opportunities for all to contribute, and the system of redistribution must enable all to contribute, while the political system must give a voice to all so that they are able to contribute at this level too. The women spoke of themselves as willing instruments and powerful forces as regards change. They spoke of the possibility of creating structures that will aid self-development among the rural poor women who are more subjected to the oppressive structures. These inequalities, they said, must be eliminated through social activism. For example, standing by their word, education through women's town hall meetings and lobbying for opportunity to participate in social activities. A young female participant captured this:

> It's easy for people to just say it is our culture that a woman should not go to school. Some of us, like myself, I know how I suffered before I am able to finish my degree. I am a graduate now. Our men think that our own is to marry, go to the kitchen. Before now, I thought it was natural too. Now, as we are talking about it too, we have seen that men say this [these] things to suppress women… we have to teach our girls how to say no (PPIK 05/04/2018).

It is remarkable that these female participants were open to explore alternative space outside the usual exploitative structure by adopting various development strategies for creative action. In fact, they saw new ways to challenge the patriarchal culture of subordination that is still an issue in their society. As unfolded in the research process, social mobilization[246] is an Ogoni major starting point as regards practical action.

Military occupation in Ogoniland

As argued in chapters 1 and 2, Ogoniland has been subjected to excessive militarization. Since the beginning of Ogoni resistance to "toxic hegemony"[247] in the early 1990s, the corrupt Nigerian government has worked hand in glove with the oil multinational companies to protect their exploitation of the land and people by providing military presence in Ogoni. Participants confirmed how the government is responsible for a variety of human rights abuses against the civilian population: extrajudicial killings, burning of homes and property, disappearance, rape, sexual harassment and other violations (Human Right Watch 1995; Amnesty International report 2020; Coomans 2003). Thus:

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[246] See Melucci 1995; Tarrow 1994; Kemmis 2011.

[247] With particular reference to two small and marginal population (Ogoni, Niger Delta-Nigeria and Erris, Northwest-Ireland) Laurence Cox, in *Challenging Toxic Hegemony*, examines power relationship between corporations, state and social movements. He explored the possibility of defeating the notoriously powerful corrupt state that collude with the wealthy multinational companies (toxic capitalism) leaving the communities with the devastating effect of oil exploration. For further discussion, see Cox 2015.

… It is not about deployment of troops or military force into Ogoni; rather, the government must withdraw from promoting its culture of impunity and the lack of accountability. The government must come out to address the issues of poverty, marginalization, and environmental assault. I can tell you for a fact that military presence in the entire Niger Delta is the cause of militarization [violent militancy] of the region. The government is our problem and it must be ready to come to the table for discussion to end this by giving the Ogoni people a chance to operate on their own (PRTSP 20.04.2018).

One middle aged female participant confirmed:

We [have] never seen anything like this. How can we live in this condition where is [it's] not safe. You see this [these] soldiers here, they are doing to us what they like and the government don't [doesn't] care. They can rape you at any time but you can't say anything. My appeal is that [the] government should do something about this or else they are going to kill all of us here (FGKHK 12.06.2018).

Most participants agreed that these acts of violation of human rights are a tactic to silence the Ogoni population that rose to challenge the powerful state. As noted by almost every woman participant, the environment remains dangerous, exposing women to multiple levels of discrimination and violent attacks. Two young women said this:

Women are terribly affected by this [military presence]. Sometimes we cannot go out because you are afraid they [military] rape you, or kill you. This is affecting us seriously and I don't know if this is how it will remain forever. We need help. If not, all of us will die in this place and the government will take their land forever (FGPBSUB 09.06.2018).

… women in this place [Ogoni] are nobody [nobodies]. Women and children are suffering seriously and nobody cares. Some of the women that you see are widows; there is no one to take care of them and their children, yet the only thing the government is doing is to send soldiers to come and kill us (FGLMLB 09.06.2018).

On the other hand, the men participants shared the same story. Respectively, an elderly and young male participant expressed themselves in this manner:

… The problem we have in Ogoni today and in Nigeria is from oil and gas [companies]. That is why we have suffered everything we have suffered. We have been killed in thousands, our women have been badly raped, if you see what we passed through from 1994 to 1998 before the death of Abacha, it was a terrible story. You will see when husband will be there and his wife will be raped by army. At his own presence… (FGPJB 29.04.2018).

…we are not just treated as second-class citizens, the military take-over of our land and their maltreatment of our people is heart breaking. … they rape our women as they like and if they have their way they will kill all the Ogoni men because they know we are not going to leave them to take our land without any compensation (PFNG 16.04.2018)

Through these accounts, participants have clearly demonstrated their role as social movement activists. Their ability to construct a narrative that defines the government's current violent activities against them is crucial as regards establishing their cause and persuading their own people to action and to persuade the government to change their acts of violence against them. It reveals the fact that they are able to judge the system which oppresses them and are willing to take action against it. Their emphasis on their resilience and resistance reveals how the tactics of the government has not discouraged their determination and struggle for justice.

Divide and Rule: a repressive tactic against Ogoni

In chapters 1 and 2, I alluded to the fact that the Ogoni current issue is traced back to historical antecedents of British colonialism, which has become a premise on which the Nigerian government oppresses minority groups in the country. The success of the colonial administration in Nigeria was largely due to Indirect Rule method used by the British colonial power to rule the country[248]. This was to prevent any united uprising against the colonial despotic regime (Mamdani 1996; Acemoglu et al. 2004). I argued in chapter 2 how this strategy is reproduced by the current Nigerian government / political elites[249] to exert their political and economic influence, mostly against the minority groups.

The research findings present the politics of divide and rule as a major government tool against the Ogoni struggle. Participants' accounts on how they have been exploited and victimized through the divide and rule tactic[250] is simply the government's strategy to disrupt the potential Ogoni coalitions between and among the different kingdoms/communities, specifically from the experience of how Ogoni were able to mobilize themselves in the early 1990s. This was captured repeatedly by participants as: "they are using our leaders [chiefs/paramount rulers] against us". Thus, participants' narratives captured in this section reveal how they perceive and understand the challenge, and recognize the possibilities of their action in relation to change.

Divide and Rule from the inside
Inevitably, African people adopted political systems that reflected the political philosophies functioning within their societies. However, the diversity of such socio-political heritages continues to be unacknowledged by our own people (indigenous leaders) due to interaction and connections between power and authority. This has become the case in Ogoni where the paramount rulers have become political stooges working against the interest of the group; they collude with the government and the multinational oil companies for their gain. It is a political strategy, used by some powerful members of the Ogoni society - those involved in national politics - to break the existing power structures (MOSOP), in order to prevent it from resisting oil activities in Ogoniland. Some participants reacted:

> If you look at me, you will know I am not a young man. I am 60 years now and I can tell you what our Ogoniland was before and what it is now. … you can see how government has finished us. We are no longer one people; everybody is doing what they like and it is bad. The government is using us. I am sad; I am sad (FGBTB 29.04.2018).

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[248] The case of northern Nigeria where the hierarchical nature of the political structure was ideal for Indirect Rule because the British could control the emirs and the emirs in turn could control their people amply confirms this
[249] Now increasingly involved in the appointment of paramount rulers
[250] By using the Ogoni chiefs against their own people

> … So, now, all the cultism stealing and this and that you are hearing in Ogoni is from the Nigerian government and Shell. This is what we call divide and rule. They use money to divide us. They buy guns for our youths and ask them to do all this sort of nonsense you're hearing. This is what is causing trouble in Ogoni today… (FGPJB 29.04.2018)

> … They [Government/Shell] bribe them [chiefs] and ask them to go against whatever we are demanding. And also,… they [Government/Shell] don't allow us to control our resources because they know that if we do that we are going to develop our place. So, what they do is they bribe the leaders of each community and the leaders of MOSOP. So, by doing that, we have discovered that some of our leaders and MOSOP of today are being controlled by the Federal Government and the State government just to make sure that Ogoni remains in poverty (FGPGDP 06.05.2018).

Two young participants supported:

> Their target is to divide Ogoni people because there is a popular saying that once the house is not united, possibly, the house will not stand. So, the government has succeeded in dividing us. … There has never been a time that MOSOP or NYCOP get themselves involved in violence. All our campaigns have been peaceful. Now, it is different; there is no unity among MOSOP leadership and we know the cause (FGPKNY 02.06.2018).

> we discovered that… since the demise of Ken Saro-Wiwa the government has come in with its divide and rule tactics with the intention of silencing Ogoni people and silencing MOSOP by sponsoring some phantom organizations to pretend as if they are speaking for the Ogoni people but they are having a different agenda (PCNNG, 07.05.2018).

In the previous analysis, it was clear that oil politics, which has been a threat to the Ogoni socio-economic life, tightened Ogoni social relationships. However, the first two texts exposed clearly the current social reality of Ogoni; how the sophisticated politics of divide and rule is able to polarise the social cohesion that participants spoke about so passionately earlier on. It reveals the reconstruction of the Ogoni social world characterised by division and skewed socio-economic conditions across the Ogoni society. However, while the findings are strong on the idea that the Ogoni social relationship is crucial in interpreting their reaction as regards mobilization in this context, it is necessary to observe that the internal strife between the Ogoni youth (NYCOP) and elders - which was there in Ken Saro-Wiwa's days and had to do with the murder of the Ogoni 4 - needs critical examination.

Another issue that divide and rule has caused is the sense of disillusionment among some other members in the society. Thus:

> Some people are saying … we should embrace whatever the government is able to do and get whatever the government is going to give us and relax. Some people are saying no, we have a question… to answer to another generation why we allowed [allow] these things to happen. The government has not responded in the way we expected. Take for instance the clean-up, what has happened to the clean-up process? Nothing! How far have they gone with the clean-up process? All these things have been tied to the politics of the day. Understand? That is why some other bodies are springing up… (PCNNG 07.05.2018).

This is the strategy employed to break the Ogoni struggle. As shown in the extract above, the government has, somehow, succeeded in convincing some members of the society to pay them off without addressing the fundamental issues of injustice that are presented in the OBR. However, the

majority of participants felt the Ogoni struggle continues and what they need is the ability to withstand these repressive tactics from the government.

Corrupt Chiefs

On a general note, one of the major barriers to economic, social and political development in Nigeria is corruption. Although there is an extensive literature explaining the entrenchment of this problem, I would like to focus here on the argument made earlier about how the incidence of corruption could be best understood in the context of colonialism - its systematic use of material inducements to compel chiefs/administrators to collaborate with them in the pursuit of their colonial project of dominating and exploiting their own peoples. Thus, I maintain the argument I made earlier that such practices have become major barriers to the Ogoni struggle.

Elders, who were once the voice of wisdom to the people, now betray the trust that the common people had in them. Here is the impression of one of the youth: "we've lost confidence entirely in them [chiefs]" (PLNK 27.04.18). This is confirmed by a middle aged participant: "Politics, politicians, broke the ranks of the traditional rulers' leadership in Ogoni" (PBWK 12.05.2018).

It is the case that this behaviour has created and widened a social gap between the people and their chiefs, which has led to our questioning the Ogoni moral standard that participants have strongly expressed. The justice and peace stories told by participants, it seems, have given way to divisions created by propaganda stories from government and Shell and members of the Ogoni society who now pay allegiance for the sake of their pockets. A middle aged participant described the situation like this:

> that communal service has been replaced with self-service. So, we now have a situation where it's like the survival of the fittest. Well, not the fittest, but survival of who is nearest to the powers... Because your acceptance by any government now depends on your distance from my [closeness to the] government. … The leaders that are close to the government get all the juicy things. The leaders that are not close to government don't get anything. So, the society is polarised. So, politics has affected, created the crack (PBWK 12.05.2018).

Evidently, the culture of clientelism has set in the Ogoni traditional system, causing so many rifts in the communities. It is the case that the corrupt practice has affected the judgements of the chiefs as regards issues of great importance in the society. A group of young participants gave these accounts:

> What I want to say concerning this issue is that most of our leaders have deviated from the right way. Like now, in most of our villages, most of the paramount rulers, if Shell wants to do something, it may be that they want to help the whole community or they want to help some youths in the community- you will see that instead of the paramount [chief] to give what he is supposed to give to the community,… himself and his cabinet will hijack it. In essence, what I want to say is that they're compromising (FGPULLP 05.06.2018).

> … One other thing is the kind of traditional powers that come to play when something is there for them to share, you discover that the chiefs they want to have it all. Take for example, this Bonny-Bodo road, there

are some names, the company gave them slots for people to be employed and you see that the chiefs brought in the people they want and the money sometimes, the staff, the workers will demand for something and the chiefs will go, and be planning with the company and that thing will not happen. Also the traditional council is part of why they're not having a voice. If anything comes, they take it and share within themselves leaving the generality of the people suffering (FGPAAK 11.06.2018).

I know some of the chiefs have been compromised because sometimes if you discover [notice] some of their sons belong to one cult or the other. So, they will find it difficult to come up and give laws… like if you violate this, something [punishment] will happen to you. In that regard, some of our chiefs have been compromising. So, that's why you see the problem in Ogoni. And when Shell or one company come and give them some little money they will forget the struggle of Ogoni and have their own selfish interest (FGPGDP 05.06.2018).

When participants were asked what the solution to this problem will be, they unanimously observed that leaders in both communities and MOSOP must return to their traditional Ogoni ethics of maintaining dignity and uprightness. This is captured by participants in the phrase "Ogoni pure-pure"[251]. One middle aged participant cautioned:

Our leaders must remember and learn from our warrior, Ken [Saro-Wiwa]. He believed in the Ogoni spirit [unity] and never accepted any bribe from the government and that is why he was able to succeed (FGPVDB 14.05.2018).

Obviously, the issue of corrupt chiefs who sabotage development and foster the divide and rule tactics of the oppressor towards the Ogoni people, could arise from the fact most of these chiefs are simply ready tools in the hands of the government which often installs through deceitful means. The process of selection of local chiefs is often compromised to get people who could easily succumb to the whims and caprice of the government's oppressive dictates, thus eroding the culture of the Ogoni people in the process.

Corrupt Youth

From participants' contributions, it is true to say that Ogoni youth are raised to be patriots. This is due to their experience of oppression, which has made them conscious of their identity as a minority group in the country. Their commitment to fight for justice, according to participants, is the responsibility of all. However, one would ask why do some young people engage in cultism causing trouble in the communities and allow themselves to be used as political thugs. One of the commonest explanations by participants is that the youth are subjected to extreme poverty, a strategy to keep them off-balance, and cause them to succumb to external influence.

Instead of providing economic stability and opportunities for the youth, the government has succeeded in a brainwashing strategy through creation of a fictional world of lies; a persuasive ideology that is causing the youth to go against their goal for social justice. Some MOSOP members explained:

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[251] Their act of selflessness and determination

the youths are the life-wire of any society. Youths constitute the work force, and so whatever value reorientation should be done in a society, should be directed to the youths. The youths are people of certain age brackets, who are curious about making ends meet. And so if you don't channel their resources…, if you don't direct them well, they would want to choose the wrong option to making life better for themselves. So, when a youth is unemployed, when the heart of the youth is not seriously engaged, and his hands are not seriously engaged, and somebody tempts them with, maybe with petty things that will make them do otherwise, they will do it (PMPDG 07.05.2018).

… Looking at the present circumstance, everyone is vulnerable in our land. …there is no other way to resolve this problem unless our youth have something to do. Our youth have talents and if they are engaged they will do better than this [present situation] (PBWK 12.05.2018).

Arguing further about the disillusionment of the youth with the government that is the source of Ogoni collective suffering, another participant expressed the same sentiments:

The challenges and problems we are facing in Ogoniland today is as a result of political crisis. The reason is that some of the politicians are using our boys to cause commotion in the communities. But sometimes, they will use them to achieve their goals and at the end, they will dump the boys and I find out that the root of this problem is as a result of unemployment. That is it. Because sometimes when they give a token to these boys to go and cause havoc in the society, they will hearken to them simply because they don't have anything doing. Had it been these boys were employed or have something doing it will be very, very difficult for you to convince someone that is having something doing and at the end of the day that person will eat and settle his family when there is no job to convince that person to convince these boys. So, one of the roots of this problem is the politicians. Because I remember vividly some years ago, when military was in charge, the citizen or a civilian cannot have access to gun but since the revolution of democracy, it will be easy for a politician to buy guns for a citizen to go and harm his colleague as well (FGPGDP 06.05.2018).

Although these stories may sound familiar, it is important to say that I was interested to see that the stories were told by ordinary youth, not prompted by anybody. What is clear in the findings is some kind of crisis weariness in Ogoni and a plea for freedom from suffering. When participants were asked about a change of attitudes by these youth, an elderly man (of 70 years) said this:

…we are foot soldiers. Even though we no longer have the energy to fight, our Ogoni spirit [unity] will never die. These children [youth] will one day realize that the politicians are deceiving them. They will come back, they will come back (FGPBTB 29.04.2018).

The Ogonis obviously seemed determined about their fight for justice. The Ogoni struggle continues and members hope that their fight for liberation will eventually create a new world in Ogoniland.

Corrupt Leadership in MOSOP
There was consensus among participants that the creation of MOSOP in the early 1990s was a reaction to the government's corrupt practices in Ogoni. On the other hand, participants established that MOSOP (especially its leaders) has become a liability to their struggle. They examined this through the eyes of Ken Saro-Wiwa who, as I argued in chapter 1, democratized MOSOP by broadening the basis of participation (MOSOP affiliates) and in many ways altered the balance of power. This structure is changed by the attitude of the present leaders. Thus:

That is one of the things that MOSOP is suffering from [politics]. He is a member, I am a member, he belongs to this group and then the two groups are clashing tomorrow, it becomes a problem harmonizing.

> I am the president, I have allegiance or I have sympathy for XYZ ['s] political party, political interest, he is the vice, he has sympathy for ABC ['s] political group, it became a bit difficult harmonizing all of these interests, including economic interest. It's not just political now, economic interest. For example, we hear on the radio, this company [oil company] wants to come, the other company wants to come, all of these, whether we like it or not, either directly or indirectly [it] affect [s] the cohesion of MOSOP (PTSB 20.04.2018).

Clearly, participants felt the present MOSOP leadership structure has not lived up to expectations. Their response to the current events in MOSOP reveals how Ken Saro-Wiwa played a critical role in shaping MOSOP in numerous ways. He defined MOSOP's goals (see OBR 1990) and advanced a nonviolent strategy that helped in mobilizing the Ogoni people. A young participant said this:

> the strategy employed by the government of Nigeria was the Snake Theory: you cut the head, and the tail has no power. So that was what they did in the case of Saro-Wiwa. But Saro-Wiwa. As a visionary leader, he said something, which is still conspicuous on the marbles of history till today. He said you can kill the messenger but not the message. Though they killed Saro-Wiwa, the agitation has gone beyond the scope of Ogoni. It has become a Niger Delta thing; it has become a global issue. Saro-Wiwa, when he was alive, MOSOP was alive in him. But the truth of the matter is that currently you hardly find a charismatic…pragmatic leader that would stand in the shoes of Saro-Wiwa. Even when we do, the qualities of Saro-Wiwa, is it alive in you? Even if you are leading the struggle in the name of MOSOP, do you have the Spirit, the courage of Ken Saro-Wiwa? So, MOSOP is not dead, but MOSOP needs somebody that can revive it (PMPDG 07.05.2018).

Another said:

> Ken was very good at looking at what you want to hear and telling you and all that. And telling you this is the solution and then dramatizing it to the world and then using a system of boycott and organising peaceful protests and all that. It was a wonderful struggle… It beats my imagination why things have fallen so much apart... …in the course of the struggle, they [Ken and companions] will always differ but there was no such division like we see now (PTSB 20.04.2018).

Although leadership in social movements has yet to be adequately theorised, (see Barker 2001; Melucci 1996), from participants' accounts above it is evident that the leadership of Ken Saro-Wiwa is still a reference point for the majority of MOSOP, especially those who are unflinchingly committed to Ogoni struggle for justice. He inspired commitment, mobilised resources, created and recognised opportunities, devised strategies and framed demands. This could be a very good starting point for MOSOP, but from a critical observational point of view, it is important that MOSOP is not stuck with the ideas of the 1990s but discusses the possibility of building new strategies to support the ongoing struggle[252].

Participants discussed the current position of MOSOP which they concluded has two factions: the political or clientelist MOSOP and grassroots MOSOP. The former dissociates itself from the original Ogoni plan to fight for justice; it supports the government and takes political positions to the detriment of their own people, while the latter is determined and continues to resist government's oppression of the people and destruction of Ogoni environment. Three young active members of MOSOP described the situation:

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[252] See MRT discussed in chapter 2

> … we became victims of politics, victims of democracy, victims of partisanship, because it is like we are doing set theory in mathematics- A versus B, there is always the bit that we cannot harmonize… (PTSB 20.04.2018).

> Let me be realistic with you [researcher], the problem we have right now is the division that you find in MOSOP. It is between the few who are saying oil resumption should be allowed and the majority who are kicking against it. So, it is about personal interest for those who want the oil activities to resume (PFNG16.04.2018).

> There is no link [between MOSOP and the grassroots members]. There is only a sponsored link [government's manipulation] … That is the problem. They [grassroots members] are left with plenty of deceit, lies, ignorance. They don't know a thing. A lot of them don't know what is happening because those who should tell them come back and lie to them (PLMK 19.06.2018).

As earlier alluded to by participants, this highlights the disparities, socio-economic condition and exclusion from the MOSOP's activities that exists between the executive members of MOSOP and members (the grassroots members), putting them at risk of further marginalization. This account raises the question as to how marginalization is experienced within MOSOP with specific focus on grassroots members. I contend that the excerpts recognize the importance of MOSOP from a wider societal and political context, whilst also taking account of the interpretive framework of the individual and how resilience within the wider Ogoni environment is shaping the experience and perceptions of the members.

Thus, though the disconnect leaves the grassroots MOSOP members helpless due to their lack of knowledge of what is happening at present, the majority think they can create a pathway to greater freedom. When asked about the solution, some young participants highlighted:

> I would suggest… our leaders should understand that it is not necessary that politics should come into the goal MOSOP is pursuing, because if they continue to… bring politics into MOSOP, it will cause a lot of problems among us. … Ogoni can have one voice and wherever a particular thing is situated for the benefit of the Ogoni people, any other person can also go to that place and benefit that same thing (FGPDBAB 14.05.2018).

Structural Violence

Structural violence in the context of this research relates to conditions such as inequalities, poverty, repression and social alienation. One of the crucial points of these findings is that participants agreed that structural violence perpetuates interpersonal violence- which is the historical, social, political and economic marginalization that has contributed to personal and community violence in Ogoni.

Though participants did not use the phrase 'structural violence', their description of the historical, social and economic marginalization was captured in my analysis of the data as structural violence. Participants in many of the interviews provided examples of factors related to structural violence; poverty, gender inequity, and other forms of discrimination and social exclusion. For example, participants at the women's focus groups identified the association between interpersonal violence

and systemic discrimination. They suggested that underlying social inequities in the forms of cultural gender roles, economic and educational exclusion, which limit their access and opportunities all, contribute to violence against women. As one participant explained:

> Our men can deny that our culture [patriarchal values] is not the cause of this [these] issues or it is finished [not an issue today], but it is not true… (PPBG 09.06.2020).

This is a clear indication of participants shedding light on the root causes of structural violence against Ogoni women from within, that is, the sociological values that are embedded in Ogoni society and behaviour.

Similarly, participants in the men's interviews highlighted men's differential access to privilege and power when compared to women and children. However, participants also highlighted that in Ogoniland, not all men share similar access to privilege and power. Thus, some Ogoni men experience structural violence in the form of political and economic marginalization and other intersecting oppressions that compromise their health and social wellbeing. This is justified in the comment below:

> …as men of the house [common phrase from African men] we suffer more by trying to take care of our family even though we have no work… (FGPMNSM 05.06.2018).

The above quote provides insightful example of how oppression and marginalization have led to deficits in Ogoni people's livelihoods, education, health and access to other basic services. These deficits are in turn often connected to their exclusion from political decision-making.

State Sponsored violence- the tragedy of the Ogonis
As the findings established, for the Ogoni people, resistance is a daily norm as they faced both the impact of Shell's destruction of their environment and the presence of the Nigerian army every day. This, for participants, explains the people's frustration, which results sometimes in the spread of violence within the communities.

Returning to the idea that Ogoni society was peaceful, participants argued, once again, that the current crisis across some communities in Ogoniland is merely the government's strategy to suppress Ogoni resistance. As mentioned before, another way of carrying out this strategy is recruiting the youth to create confusion around the villages. Some young participants shared their views:

> Before the interferences [oil exploration] we were okay, we were contented with ourselves. We loved our farm works, we loved the way things were, we were okay with it. … until the recent problems [conflict]. One thing I see also is that, back in the years, somebody from Port Harcourt, somebody from any part of the country, any part of the State, wants a housemaid, he wants an Ogoni girl or an Ogoni boy, not because they were slaves, but because they were calm, cool headed, decent… There weren't such notable quarrels like I can remember. It might just be, this is not your farmland, why encroach into my land. Two families will just settle it. There was respect, between the youths, the elders, there was respect for constituted authorities, the kings were highly respected, they were not even too many as at then, there

were no politically created kings [government imposed chiefs], there was only constituted stool, respected, and so once he said this, it becomes that and it becomes the law. And so, the people loved it the way it was. Until it got to this point where we are into now [conflict] (PLMK 19.06.2018).

It's baffling. There are different dimensions of what people have postulated to have been responsible for this [crisis]. Most of them were actually initiated into most of these [conflict] by politicians who capitalized on the failures of the economic condition in the society. Young people who are frustrated, … are mobilized and used as weapons of violence against their opponents and so. So, that is one belief. The second belief is that is simply that a lot of young people who could not have their dreams fulfilled are frustrated and they are fending for themselves in whichever way they think they could do so. But from all I can see, I know that the first reason is the very strong factor in escalation of most of the violence that occur. … people tend to say that ooh it's because people feel marginalized economically and so on and that is the reason why they chose violent method. But in our area, it's not really that people are angry over not fulfilling their economic desires or dreams. They are more or less like victims themselves of socio-political setting they find themselves in (PJOE 13.05.2018).

I don't have any fact on that. But the Ogoni society right now is permeated, it's infested with the presence of cult-related violence, cult-related activities and cult clashes. Our politicians are the one who arm these boys during campaign to help them. (PBWK, 12.05.2018).

The narratives above clearly indicate that marginalization of the Ogoni people (especially the youth) has contributed to the internal crisis carried out by the youth. In the present circumstances, they see violence as justifiable; they see it as self-defense or protection of their values. In fact, this can be examined alongside the experience and action of other ethnic minority groups in the Niger Delta whose approach to seeking justice is through violent means[253]. Though my experience in the field provides empirical justification for this claim, it is important to note that violence (from cult groups) in Ogoniland has caused so much destruction and pain to an already vulnerable people.

Continuing to reflect on the cause of youth violence across their communities, one of the chiefs who participated in an interview said this:

the problem in Ogoni is from within and outside. As you can see our youth, there is nothing for them to do. Most of them [youth] have finished school and there is nothing to do. The only thing our government can give us is guns to fight during election. They remember us only during election and it is not about giving the Ogoni people something good but guns to fight and kill each other. … I have to be frank with you, we the leaders too are not helping matters. They collect money from the politicians to help them too (PFTDGG 02.05.2018).

The above excerpt reveals participants' feelings about the ongoing suppression of the Ogoni by the government, but it is obvious again that it emphasized the fact that violence in Ogoni is uniquely *internal*.[254] For their voices to be useful in practice, they observed, there must be a conscious effort to resist government's manipulation of the Ogoni people.

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[253] See Mai-Bornu 2020

[254] The word *internal* is used here to communicate participants' emphasis of the difference between the violent activities that takes place in Ogoniland and what happens in the other communities in the Niger Delta (Niger Delta militancy). Though the phenomenon can be said to be the same (oil activities leading to human rights abuses, poverty and destruction of environment), the other communities engage in destruction of public property, arson, vandalism etc. causing distress not only to the government but for residents in affected neighbourhoods (for more discussion see Mai-Bornu 2020). Participants insist that there is no record of Ogoni's engagement with an outside militant group.

Propaganda Crisis

Building upon their experiences, participants observed that disinformation and propaganda have been a government strategy against the Ogoni movement. This is the attempt to project the Ogoni movement as a violent group, with the aim to influence the attitudes of other Nigerians or to create skepticism throughout the country against the Ogonis. This is a repressive tactic to finally crush MOSOP and its demand for justice. The smear campaign, political and ideological indoctrination, and divide and rule tactics have successfully tapped into the Ogoni social norms exploiting their weakness and causing the internal division as reported by participants. Two middle aged participants captured this:

> … since the government could not handle the strength of our Ogoni leaders; to be specific Ken [Saro-Wiwa and companions], they opted for a propaganda war against the people (FGPTDKP 29.04.2019).

> … I can tell you that there are two sides to what they call the Ogoni crisis. There is the propaganda which was sold during the military era and which they struggled to sell and there is the underlining truth. For instance, we were told that those four Ogoni chiefs were killed by youths. When they came back from that incident that day, the governor displayed a bag which he claimed contained the burnt remains of the four Ogoni chiefs. And thereafter, people will come and they will take them to the visitors lounge and show them that they were burnt in a Volskwagen beetle car. The first question, which you should ask yourself, is that: in Ogoni, we don't have the cremation technology. We don't cremate our people in Ogoniland, so we don't have the oil or whatever will make people to burn to ashes. …, the beetle car that was displayed all through that time even in newspapers, the blue colour of the car was intact, the four tyres were still standing, and yet four persons were alleged to have been burnt to ashes, to the extent that their remains were carried in a bag, in that same car! How can four persons burn in a car with four tyres still with air and the colour of the car is still showing sky-blue. That is why I said there's a propaganda that happened that time and the truth. (PBWK 12.05.2018).

The point is that this tactic has weakened the Ogoni struggle but at the same time, it is important to note that the majority of the Ogonis are aware of the government's propaganda machine, and they are determined to keep fighting. They emphasised that the government's vicious attack on them will not deter them from continuing their struggle. It was obvious that the majority still believed a vigorous campaign at the local and international levels[255] is still necessary. One middle aged official members of MOSOP reacted:

> the double standard or propaganda war from the government will not stop. The propaganda machine is recycled from the military to the civilian government. We are not fools so they cannot fool us. We stand for our right and we are not going to give up. For me, I believe that Ken [Saro-Wiwa] succeeded and it's our turn now, and I have the hope that we will win the fight (PFNG 16.04.2018).

Thought the grassroots members are not satisfied with the current leadership of MOSOP as mentioned before, there is a strong belief among many that a new narrative is possible. They believe that the realization of these long overdue projects is imminent. Two young members of MOSOP gave this fascinating account of their unrelenting effort to mobilize the masses in order to overcome the tactics of their oppressors:

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[255] Since Ogoni is recognised by UNPO

> For me, the tactics of the government doesn't appear to be powerful at all; it rather resembles that of a failed state. We may appear weak and helpless as many people think, but believe me, the Ogoni people are one. The spirit of our Ogoni martyrs [Ken Saro-Wiwa and companions] is still with us. There may be crisis among us but for this [oppression] reason, I am convinced that we shall rise again and our rights must be respected (FGSKP 02/06/2018).

> We must remember always our history; the victory that was achieved by our heroes [Ken Saro-Wiwa et al.] through activism. They were strong in pushing forward their agenda, and nothing would have been possible without the people on the ground [grassroots members]. The momentum they have built is something we must sustain. It is our duty to mobilize our members and make sure the tactics or propaganda of the government fails (FGPWVY 02.06.2018).

These thoughts give an insight into what the Ogoni movement considers effective in terms of living out its identity and bolstering its legitimacy among both supporters and potential sympathizers in the country. Seemingly, the brazen attitude of the government did not achieve its intentioned effect; rather, it has strengthened the people (Bob & Nepstad 2007) to continue in their struggle to deprive the government and multinational companies of the oxygen they need to carry on. Constantly referring to the events of the 1990s led by Ken Saro-Wiwa, participants believed it is the action they take today that will determine their future history.

MOSOP: Dilemmas and Strategies

As I mentioned earlier, some MOSOP activists felt there is a disconnect between the leadership and the grassroots MOSOP. The disparity between the leaders and grassroots members can be explained using the 'power representation dilemma' theory (Becher 2010; Nicholls & Uitermark 2015) which arises from the privilege position of perpetrators compared to marginalized people. We looked at this from the point of view of relationship between Ogoni and Shell/Government and among themselves.

On the one hand, Shell/Nigeria decided to use their status, knowledge and skills, supported by the government, to promote their own interest against the interest of the Ogonis. On the other hand, it is obvious that leaders are taking advantage of the situation to marginalize weaker groups within the movement. The client group seeks more of their personal interest over the Ogoni struggle for justice. Obviously, there is a break in relationships between MOSOP leadership and the common Ogonis, whose views are not taken on board. Below are the reactions from some MOSOP members:

> Yes, there is a disconnect. Though we believe in the idea MOSOP, everybody will subscribe to the idea MOSOP. We will follow MOSOP anywhere MOSOP wants to go, but practically at the grassroots a common Ogoni man will look at MOSOP like, we really don't trust this people. That is the reality on ground […] (PSKMG 30/04/2018).

> It hasn't completely gone off […] It's struggling. You see there is a mark that the Ogoni people expect a MOSOP leader to score [...] there is a mark that you are expected to score […] in terms of your statements, your speeches, there is a mark, because when we have [had] people who were […] our best. Some of our best were those who led MOSOP and so they were marks they were scoring [scored] when they handle this issue of MOSOP. You respect them at the level of coordinating the people [...] What made MOSOP strong was not one individual voice it was a collective voice and when people are mobilized such that we are taking collective decision it becomes strong. The bond becomes very strong

that's what used to keep MOSOP but today we have someone who appears to be moving on his own, he talks on his own (PYKT 23/04/2018).

Nevertheless, here was a counter opinion from one participant:

Yes, […] the good thing… is that today, we have better ways of disseminating information and I think that one of the things that has frustrated government's effort to create problems here is that we are able to respond spontaneously to every action. Thank God for the internet [...] so we [are] able to connect the media houses almost immediately there is an event and so that is what is saving us now so, there is some difference between the struggle as it is now and when Ken Saro-Wiwa was there and that is frustrating government [...] (PFNG 16/04/2018).

Though the preceding excerpts raises some question about the relationship between the official body of MOSOP with grassroots members, there were positive accounts from other participants who felt MOSOP is still much alive amidst the internal rift. It was a consensus that MOSOP leadership must re-evaluate their strategies to conform to the original Ogoni vision outlined in the OBR. To be able to handle this dilemma here one young MOSOP participant said:

We [Ogoni] all know that Shell and the government are the perpetrators of the current horrible situation in Ogoni, but we have to take out time to resolve our internal division. The issues within the Ogoni society among its members must be resolved in order to give way to any meaningful solution to our problem […].

This idea was echoed by another participant:

[…] what I see as the primary thing that we must do to ensure peace in Ogoniland, I know that there is no place that development can occur without unity, so our leaders should come together […] So, for us to achieve a common good so that from there all the […] communities in Ogoni will benefit from it and we might have peace, I suggest that they should come together and agree on a point so that if this people [MOSOP] are fighting for this one, let it be that all the groups will support it (FGPULB 14/05/2018).

Furthermore, another participant said:

MOSOP had that strong capacity to consult. MOSOP had consultation as one of its great tools. After consulting, you disseminate information. Yeah, but in this case the present day MOSOP does not seem to have that capacity to consult (PYKT 23/04/2018).

This presents an apt description of how MOSOP members are set to engage with possible ways of resolving the problems within the movement. Their reaction calls to mind the phrase "the personal is political"[256] (Smith 2012) which is about the process of fragmented and isolated individuals coming to identify as a group with common goals rather than merely personal problems or shortcomings. Articulating such a basis for common identity is precisely what Antonio Gramsci meant by the word 'articulation' (i.e. joining pieces together or making connection and alliances). Meaning there is now a stronger sense, at least, that none of the Ogoni activists are alone. The articulation of their common story about structural violence and socio-economic and political inequalities in relation to multinational oil companies and the Nigerian government provides a

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[256] The personal is political (also the private is political) is a political argument used as a rallying slogan of student movements and second-wave feminism from the late 1960s. It emphasised the connections between personal experience and larger social and political structures. The phrase was popularised by feminist Carol Hanisch's in her publication of a 1969 essay under the title "The Personal is Political" in 1970 (see Smith 2012:153)

stronger basis for the collective mobilization it will take to change the intolerable situation in Ogoni.

MOSOP: Articulation of Ogoni Grievances

As participants argued, their grievances are caused by the denial of their basic human needs. Apart from the unhindered military operations and series of punitive raids on Ogoni villages that saw the death of hundreds of women, men and children, there are still flagrant human rights abuses, and oil exploration is still going on in Ogoniland. From this experience, it is easy to see why participants concluded that their struggle is as a result of the structural manifestations of political and economic inequality and exploitation of Ogoni people and their environment by their own government. Thus, their understanding of what oppression and marginalization mean explains their action, which is resistance to the activities of fossil fuel industries in Ogoni and their demand for justice.

Although participants acknowledged there are significant obstacles[257] that are affecting or influencing the direction of MOSOP, their commitment to nonviolent resistance, as the findings show, is crucial. Obviously, the flame of justice that was lit in the early 1990s is still burning in Ogoni. Here are some reactions:

> I am a member of MOSOP, and I was there when things were tough. I have seen everything [reference to killings in Ogoni, especially the Ogoni 4 and 9] … I have not benefitted from anything [reference to clentelist MOSOP], but I will not surrender… (RFSK 09.09.2019).
>
> To be effective, we need to stay in the game even when violence occurs (FGPUHPK 11.06.2018).
>
> …the more we are not afraid of them [Government and Shell], the better we are (PLMK 19.06.2018).
>
> … no matter how difficult it is and how dangerous it is for us, our success is what I am after (PPNG 21.04.2018).
>
> We are fighting a society that hates us, but our Ogoni spirit will help us to victory (PVGK 01.06.2018).

The statements above make explicit what MOSOP stands for and what it is against. The moral outrage over human rights abuses, environmental strangulation and socio-economic and political marginalization was to galvanise grassroots mobilization. Though participants acknowledged the division that exists within the group, their shared narratives and refusal to yield to government repressive tactics are clear indications of how they have developed a character[258] in the course of their mobilization, which is to fight doggedly until justice is realized.

It is obvious that government brutality against the Ogoni people has only succeeded in making them courageous; it has shaped their interactions with others. They are self-confident and they enjoy being activists. As argued in chapters 1 & 2, the Ogoni struggle has reshaped the minority politics

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[257] Internal factors like factionalism and the external which is the government's repressive tactics
[258] Based on Ken Saro-Wiwa's strategy of awareness and activism rooted in nonviolence.

in Nigeria. However, what became apparent from the research findings are the prevailing challenging issues[259] which allow for further examination since they pose enormous challenges to the struggle, challenges from the point of view of context and strategies.

Ogoni Resistance to Oppression

One of the arguments that I have made consistently throughout the thesis is that the Ogoni people are denied their dignity and live under conditions of flagrant injustice. This is confirmed by participants whose reaction pattern is characterised by their complete resistance to the worsening and degrading situation. From their actions, it is clear that resistance is happening even in the midst of the most horrifying efforts to fully shatter their struggle. Thus,

> […] from what we can see now, we can't sit down and watch our future destroyed like that. We must fight for our future so that we can get our life back (PVGK 01/06/2018).
>
> As I can see, this plan [collective mobilization] will help us with good direction of what we must do go achieve our goal (PFNG 16/04/2018).
>
> […] this way [discussion about best strategies] is great. We must try and follow this style because this is what our people need to know so that we will know where we are going (PFTDGG 02/05/2018).

In our previous discussions in chapters 1 and 2, it is evident how the state facilitates violence against the Ogonis in Ogoniland by the use of its structures of power. The government has the power and it exercises it though oil activities (gas flaring) and constant effort to repress the people's resistance through physical violence (military crackdown). However, the manner in which participants were able to put the situation into words empowers them, because their voices testify to the struggle to maintain their stand in the face of dehumanization, and to their immense efforts to impede the governments' attempts to undermine their struggle for freedom.

The PAR study process is a crucial element in this research as participants were able to express themselves, which is itself an act of resistance. Like the writings of Ken Saro-Wiwa did[260], it is appropriate to say that participants' testimonies safeguard their mental survival by offering them a lifeline through which they can overcome oppression and marginalization. Examples of such are the narrative-life story of participants. An elderly participant said:

> The worst thing for us [Ogoni people] will be when we are not allowed to talk again. You can see the way they have tried to destroy us, but we are still talking our mind. So, for me, they cannot kill our voices as Ken [Saro-Wiwa] said before he died… (FGJBLK 20.06.2018).

Why is speaking up so important for participants? From their voices, we can see a progression from the past into the future. It is their strategy for rejecting the possibility of assimilation into the dominant majority. In fact, their voices exposed their power as a grassroots movement, which is simply the will and passion of the Ogoni people who bring an unrestrained enthusiasm that can

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[259] e.g. the political versus grassroots MOSOP.
[260] mobilised the local Ogoni people at the local level and also influenced international support- through his cooperation with UNPO

carry their motion through. However, the success of the Ogoni struggle largely remains to be seen since, as a grassroots movement, there is more to be done as regards strategies[261].

The Ogoni movement is different

In chapter 2, I discussed Ogoni's nonviolent approach used by MOSOP in challenging government abuses against them. Even though the Niger Delta region is considered as having the most violent militia groups seeking justice from the government, this research established how the Ogoni nonviolent struggle has challenged the impression. The Ogoni struggle has distinguished itself in that its power, as participants confirmed, in the last 25 years, is grounded in their socio-cultural background. Though there are various explanations as to the causes of violence in Ogoniland, participants believed there is no correlation between the Ogoni culture and the current violent activities in the land. For them, it is simply a reaction to the impact of marginalization and military brutality. According to one young participant:

> I will not accept that the Ogoni people are troublemakers. What is causing the present crises now is political supremacy. Politicians! They came into our land; they killed our leader [Ken Saro-Wiwa], who was fighting for justice peacefully. We are angry, and our youth are angry too, and they are causing trouble. You know, we are suffering, like in this state now; we are suffering in the hands of politicians. They were looking for all the strategies to disorganize the Ogonis, so if the Ogonis are not living in peace, if they are disorganized, their aim is achieved. For me, this is the cause of the violence (FGPMIB 29/04/2018).

Another middle aged participant supported this:

> What we have is a movement that spurs people to act against the conditions that they found themselves. That was what went on under Ken… I can say that we have seen strong influence of government and the oil industry in the activities of MOSOP, and we see members of MOSOP, who are now advocating in favour of government and the oil industry. That suggests that money is involved. There is some kind of compromise. This is not part of our plan (FGPFNY 02/06/2018).

It is interesting to see how participants associated themselves with the idea of nonviolence even when it is obvious that they face a very strong, brutal, repressive approach from the government. As the Ogoni struggle continues, it is important to have real hope for more organised structures of nonviolence that will be seeding ground for their freedom and development of Ogoniland.

The research reports about youth crisis, and according to participants, for the youth to withdraw from the violent activities there must be an alternative.

> ...when you cannot do something and you're hungry with so much tramadol circulating in the area, drugs have set in, guns are with you... Mind you, therefore that there must be some means by which you provide alternative employment opportunities. Our youth have nothing to do. They are idle and an idle mind, they say, is the devil's workshop. I believe if they have jobs they will not engage in these activities (FGPLMP 18/06/2018).

Obviously, the people's capacity to mobilize from within and generate pressure is critical to overcoming the obstacles created by the oppressors. For the sake of organization and sustainability,

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[261] See McAdam et al. 2001.

participants acknowledged that every Ogoni must turn towards the OBR, which provides a common framework and clear set of demands for justice. No doubt, MOSOP is a source of inspiration to many social movements, human rights advocates and environmental activists.

Ogoni is not yet history or archive- Still waiting for justice
The Ogoni story is told through research work by academics, activists and NGOs across the globe. However, there is a noticeable tendency[262] to ignore the continuing tragedy of the Ogoni people. As Kukah (2011) describes it, the Ogonis are still sucked into the vortex of a furnace lit by the multinational oil companies. The relentless government propaganda and repressive tactics have left many people thinking the Ogoni struggle is over. Here are reactions from some of the participants:

…the Ogoni people have been forgotten (PLNK 27.04.18).

…like my brother said, we are no more on the map of Nigeria; we are left on our own to die (PLMK 19.06.2018).

Despite the continuation of oppression and marginalization of the Ogoni people, it is obvious from the quotes above, which have helped us to build upon Ogoni's experiences, we will be able to see more concretely the direction of their struggle. As discussed earlier, the Ogoni people have dedicated their time and space, and engaged in conversations that carefully explore the centrality of oppression and marginalization, in order to shape their struggle.

Thus, the PAR process was helpful in relation to helping participants find the necessary framework that will facilitate their struggle for change. A young participant courageously said this:

For anyone to understand the Ogoni story [he or she] must see beyond what is happening now. We [Ogoni] must be able to remember the past in order to be able to move forward. Ken [Saro-Wiwa] was aware that these people [Government and Shell] will kill him, but he never gave up. He said even if he is dead, his message will [would] not die. I think that is what we are holding onto. We are not giving up and our fight is still on until we get justice (FGPUHPK 11.06.2018).

Another supported this:

… I am not happy about what is happening in Ogoniland now. You [researcher] can see how we are suffering here… our people [Ogonis] have nothing like income to help themselves, and we don't know when this thing [oppression] is going to end. All we can see happening here [Ogoniland] is people coming to take information from us and go. People must know that we are still being marginalized. (PFNG 16.04.2018).

From the above statements, it is evident that the PAR framework allowed participants to make sense of their experiences and frustrations in a society that has dominated and exploited them. It is important to note that this analysis addresses the need for taking a closer look at how an indigenous group strives for their human rights and self-determination through nonviolence.

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[262] From some researchers, both within and outside the country and even some MOSOP members

Freedom and Development

The Ogoni position, which is basically for their self-determination, provides a powerful platform from which we can argue in favour of their approach as regards resistance to the exploitative and oppressive structures that they see as the causes of underdevelopment in their land. For development to occur in Ogoniland, participants say that there must be a return to their Ogoni cultural values which produce a democratic and fair model that is in line with the vision of Ken Saro-Wiwa. These values support the liberty of the individual and the communities to express their thoughts and to be free to participate in the affairs of their society. This is about restoring Ogonis' dignity and being able to make choices and be creative in life. This freedom will break the barriers of inequalities that have existed for decades, and allow them access to their resources. One middle aged participant explained:

> … we [Ogonis] cannot ignore the damage that government have caused on our land. As you can see, there is no life in Ogoniland. For anything to happen here [Ogoniland] again, we must go back to our former way of living. The only way we can survive is for Government and Shell to clean our land. We have to go back to our Ogoni democratic system as in the old days so that everybody will be involved and we can be responsible for our own future (FGFNY 2.06.2018).

Also,

> We had a very good democratic system of governance… … a chief, a royal king and his council. The council is [was] constituted of representatives of the different dynasties in the community. Things were organized in our communities and if we should get back to our normal life, everything will be Ok. We don't need any government to tell us what to do (PVGK 01.06.2018).

It is more important than ever that the Ogonis have an opportunity to deepen their understanding of the complex and harsh realities of the human rights abuses, poverty, gender disparity and environmental degradation meted out to them. Thus, freedom in the Ogoni context means defeating the alliance between the Nigerian government and the multinational company Shell, "toxic capitalism"[263].

To be agents of their own development requires building a formidable social cohesion that is rooted in the Ogoni socio-cultural worldview- communal consciousness. The focus, as participants argued, must be on individuals and their capacity and the opportunity they get to improve their freedom.

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[263] The "Toxic Capitalism" notion is simply about the specific visions of society, state, and economy. It is about the legitimacy of the neoliberal economic order. Strategies used by powerful actors in the struggle for hegemony. In this context, which is about environmental degradation, the concept of "toxic capitalism" must be understood in terms of environmental crimes by corporations (corporate economic or financial crimes), since at the centre of environmental, safety and health issues are the chemicals industries. These industries are of strategic importance to national economies but pose unique hazards and risk to people's lives. When the polarisation of wealth within and between national economies is looked at, we are faced with individuals and groups who take advantage of the institution of property while simultaneously evading it, for example, by depriving others of property. Hence, the emphasis here is that we need to understand the nature of contemporary and emergent forms of corporate organisation, of their place in contemporary economies, and of the relationships between them and state formations. For further discussion, see: Pearce & Tombs (1998); Neil (2009).

Regardless of the internal rifts between members of the Ogoni communities, participants emphasized their *Ogoniness* -unity and sense of justice.

Change the Ogoni story
One of the key points that the research findings has revealed is that abject poverty and the absence of justice in Ogoni has not deterred or weakened their spirit of resistance. Through the PAR process, participants demonstrated how their conscience cannot be silenced. Thus,

> … no matter what happens, our rights must be respected. The next generation will not cry like we are crying (FGPNBFB 12.06.2018).

> For me, I believe our children will not suffer this like us [ourselves]… (FGPPVBB 12.06.2018).

Obviously, participants spoke regarding the transformation of a system that preys on (toxic hegemony) and benefits from the suffering of the Ogonis, and the effort to change it. They agree on the kind of freedom they want- a freedom that charges every Ogoni to never relent in resisting corporate crimes committed against the Ogoni people by the powerful Nigerian state and Shell.

As a socio-cultural movement, one can argue that MOSOP is an organic structure that flows from the foundations of the Ogoni society, and its struggle for justice is evident in the way the movement is structured[264]. Participants' stories, such as- "We are Ogoni, we are born MOSOP" (FGPBBBB 12.06.2018); "We know our rights" (FGPVNNB 12.06.2018), are evidence of their commitment to MOSOP, and for the fact that their role in the movement is crucial. This shows participants' enthusiasm over the analysis of our discussion in relation to their effort to vigorously engage in campaigns to get rid of the suffering caused by harmful corporate acts.

Reflecting on the current global justice movement debates on anti-corporatism[265] what I think, would be appropriate for the Ogoni activists is to build ties and learn new strategies like engaging in the spread of information (information technology), which is practiced by some MOSOP members already, and nonviolent protest and persuasion, and non-cooperation in social, economic and political areas (see chapter 2- Sharp 1973). Though the research acknowledges some complexities within the Ogoni socio-cultural movement, the onus is on every member of the Ogoni society to actively participate in their campaign for justice.

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[264] See MOSOP affiliate in chapter 1
[265] Opposed to multinational corporations having unregulated political power exercised through trade agreements and deregulated financial markets, see Della Porta 2007

Development Initiatives

Beyond the shades of doubt, participants established the fact that development programmes[266] initiated by the government have largely benefitted the rich[267] and are an attempt to cajole the Ogonis into believing that the government will improve their socio-economic situation. Also, there are institutional and non-institutional charity groups in Ogoni which claim their agenda is to assist the situation of the poor. About this, some participants remarked:

> …this is not the kind of development that we expect. If you don't ask us what we want, it is not possible to succeed (FGPFAMP 18.06.2018).

> We are tired of all those people [government and NGOs] who come to lie to us… I think they come to manipulate those people who can join them (FGPLMP 18.06.2018).

Accordingly:

> …we [Ogoni] have the right to our lives, and have the right to live and walk freely. We [Ogoni] are being hunted by agents of the State like hunters in search for antelopes in the forest. Why is the government not allowing us to do what we want with our resources? For me, unless government and Shell give us space [freedom], there will continue to be trouble in Ogoni. Unless we handle things like our forefathers did, government is only dividing us to rule us. The work of the NGOs is not helping us too. We [Ogoni] know what we want. (FGPDBAP 06/05/2018).

> …you will spend a lot of money on security but it's allowed but you see, no matter how many companies are built here, the consciousness of Ogoni people is that there is strong social injustices that must be addressed. Even if everybody gets jobs, even if the roads are fixed the hospitals are fixed; we still see the big injustice against the Ogoni because we [Ogoni] are contributing so much. Sir!... We [Ogoni] see that as gross injustice against our people... (PFNG 16/04/2018).

The above ideas justify the fact that development must be contextualized to respect the dignity of Ogoni life. It should be about sustaining communities rather than making them subservient to the dictates of global economic imperatives (Kumar 2016). The arguments also show how Ogoni people are concerned about a development approach that is directly relevant and positive to their experience as a marginalized and oppressed society. Theories of development that are formulated for the highly industrialized countries have become guidelines for governments in developing countries, and for local and international NGOs and other donor agencies. The concern is more

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[266] One of the major projects is the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) established by President Olusegun Obasanjo in the year 2000 with the sole mandate of developing the oil-rich Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Its mission is to offer a lasting solution to the socio-economic difficulties of the Niger Delta Region and to facilitate the rapid and sustainable development of the Niger Delta into a region that is economically prosperous, socially stable, ecologically regenerative and politically peaceful. See: http://www.commonlii.org/ng/legis/num_act/ndcea504/

[267] See corruption probe of the 2-interim management of the NNDC. It is alleged that it has spent N81.5 billion in 7 months (October 2019-May 2020). See: https://nairametrics.com/2020/07/19/corruption-probe-nddc-denies-spending-n81-5-billion-in-6-months/

about what needs to be done to meet their target, irrespective of what that translates into (Kumar 2016).

Though in most developing countries, people look to NGOs rather than governments to provide welfare, it is important to examine the evolution of the role of NGOs in Ogoni and elsewhere in Africa. For Manji (1998) and Manji and O'Coill (2002), what the NGOs do is simply taking away agency. Their approach, they argue, is more of the business model, which perpetually frames Africans as victims in order to gain funding. By this, Manji established the idea of "development and white saviours" who need victims. It means that the NGOs' "…role in 'development' represents a continuity of the work of their precursors, the missionaries and voluntary organisations that cooperated in Europe's colonisation and control of Africa" (Manji & O'Coill (2002).

Furthermore, it is important to mention about the explosive growth of local NGOs in Africa, Nigeria in particular, due to the denial of self-determination as explained in this thesis. As Stavenhagen (2017:26) argues, and I concur, "the violence we see around us is not generated by the drive for self-determination, but by its negation". And, the denial of self-determination is essentially incompatible with true democracy, which in the case of Nigeria, is the cause of the establishment of local NGOs- an elitists project run by skewed politicians who, instead of embarking of a collective emancipatory agenda, perpetuate the "white saviours vs victims" development principle.

The following remarks of two Ogoni activist in his late thirties explain their perception and indicated clear gaps between their context and the development interventions.

> We are seen many NGOs here [in Ogoni], but unfortunately, they don't take on board the crucial issues we are facing. We want to secure and manage our resources. It is our right. There is no any other effort that will yield any significant results for us (PCNNG 07.05.2018).

And,

> Both the NGOs and these people [the elitist] see us as poor, ignorant, backward people. They are playing with our condition because it has created jobs for them for many years now. Nobody wants to address our issues. They are not concerned about the socio-economic upliftment of the Ogoni people (PVGK 01/06/2018).

Thus, the refusal to give the people a chance to transform their lives by themselves undermines the struggle of the Ogoni people to emancipate themselves from economic, social and political oppression (Manji & O'Coill 2002). Coming from the Ogoni context, therefore, it is fair to say that if the agenda of NGOs is for the emancipation of humankind, then it is necessary that their work is seen in the political domain. Meaning, their support to grassroots movements that seek to challenge oppressive social systems is inevitable.

What the Ogoni society demands for is the kind of development activity that recognizes specificities or contextuality; a development that recognizes the capacity of a group. A people-

centred approach to development that is more effective and paves the way for sustainable plans or policies (HDR 1990). Thus, any development plan that does not seek to dismantle the structural inequalities in their land is simply good for nothing. Thus, "give us freedom and we [Ogoni] decide what to do with it" (PNSKM 09.05.2018). And,

> the solution that I see that will address this problem is that there must be a state for the Ogoni. Because with a state for the Ogoni, I am sure that even the issues of the oil will be resolved. And if Ogoni oil is allowed to be extracted by the Ogoni people, of course, it's going to be win-win for everybody because government would have revenue, the Ogoni people will have revenue, and the rest of Nigeria will also have some revenue coming out of here. (FGPFNY 02/06/2018).

Again, this is not about secession, but the Ogoni's demand for openness, inclusiveness and responsiveness, to allow full participation of the locals and insist those responsible in generating the knowledge, benefit from it; a development that is concerned with the enhancement of life in terms of the freedom that will be enjoyed by all Ogoni people.

Youth Empowerment

As noted in the dialogue with the youth, development for Ogoni youth involves defeating the social, economic and political structures of oppression to allow programmes that will permit the development of effective responsive measures such as social and academic competence, leadership and vocational skills. It shows that the empirical result does not only address what should be eliminated but what should be created. Participants elaborated:

> …. [the youth] need skill [ed] work, some are less privileged… [because] they were not opportune to witness the four corners of school. So these ones needs to go into craftwork, at the end of the craftwork, they will be settled. The settlement I mean is if I am going in for a tailoring, at the end of the tailoring job, a sewing machine and a weaving machine and a store could be rented for me and a table for me to do my cutting on top. I think that's the settlement. (PPIK 05.04.2018).

> … one of the major problems in Ogoni is skill gap. … In Ogoni, we have youths who some go to school and are educated but how is that translating into being useful? How is that translating into economic activities? We need to raise this set of youths who will not wait for employment, we need a system of mentorship, a system of training them and making them to be entrepreneurs, not learning one skill and you think that skill translate into money (PTSB 20.04.2018)

> My own solution is that the Ogoni environment should be cleaned-up, should be restored and people should equally be empowered, not by giving them cash, but with basic training, modern ways of farming could also be an option (FGPMGP 07.05.2018).

Basing themselves largely on the enlightening awareness of power inequalities and the impact on their lives, participants discussed their involvement in social and political actions in order to eradicate personal and social injustice.

Discussion on Research Findings

In this section, I discuss the research results as they connect to my four main research questions. Specific questions were designed to access more detailed information related to each of the four

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main research questions. The questions focussed on (1) Ogoni social reality both past and present; (2) youth reaction to oppression and marginalisation; (3) MOSOP's current approach to their demand for justice; internal and external forces; (4) MOSOP's strategy going forward. Below are a few examples of the kind of qualitative open-ended questions used during the interview sessions: "What was the nature of Ogoni society before Shell? Can you (participants) talk about the reaction of Ogoni youth to the current social reality? Are there specific ways (strategies) that MOSOP is approaching this struggle for justice that we can be hopeful? Are they (MOSOP leaders) actually doing what the Ogoni people expect them to do? So, you think government of Nigeria influences who becomes the leader (paramount chiefs) in Ogoniland?"

These interview questions were constructed to reflect the main concepts of Ogoni culture, struggle, crisis, existence, poverty, resources etc. which defines the Ogoni social reality. The approach allowed for spontaneous discussions of issues raised by participants; it helped participants explore the statements they made, and to talk on their experiences and what they learned from the experience. On my part, it was important to understand what each participant meant by giving a description as it helped in the analysis process when counting responses and coding similarities. For example, "oppression" and "marginalization" could mean very different thing or the same thing to different people. The subsequent discussion takes up a critical interpretation of the research questions drawing from participants' views.

Youth (MOSOP) Response to the Socio-economic and Political Injustices in Ogoniland
Participants explored the relationship between Ogoni's past and present; with particular focus on the current social reality. As observed previously, the relationship between the youth and the movement is perhaps now more complex and crucial rift between the youth and Ogoni elders[268] than it had been in the 1990s. One point that characterized this is *internal* youth violence -hostile youth harassing members of communities within Ogoniland- in some cases, these are members of cultists group,[269] which, according to participants, is a reaction to the current socioeconomic, environmental and political changes in Ogoni. This was captured by two young participants in these words:

> The difficulties are many and it may look like there will never be solution for us, but if peace is to come to Ogoniland, then this challenge (youth crisis) is necessary. I don't believe these youths are intentionally causing these crises. It is caused by the government and our politicians. It is necessary that our demands must be met for our youth to stop the crisis (RFMG 10.09.2019).

The other, who is one of the leaders of MOSOP, reiterated:

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[268] See Kukah 2011:89-158

[269] The effect of their violent activities does not only change the life of the immediate victims, but also affect their families and members of the communities; physical aggression, disregard of social norms, threatening others-cultism, looting and abuse of drugs.

> …Poverty is the root cause of youth crisis in our land [Ogoni]. We have been neglected by these heartless people [government and oils company], and our own people [Ogoni politicians] are not left out. The friction in MOSOP and our youth misbehaviour are cause by the ongoing discrimination against us [Ogoni]. So, in my opinion these troubles will go if our rights are respected. I agree that the crisis are important since as you [research] can see, these crisis are within and can easily be controlled (RFFDF 10.09.2019).

As established by the research, MOSOP's ideology has never been violence - its founding philosophy was nonviolence. The internal youth violence creeping into its ranks is seen as a disturbing phenomenon orchestrated by "bad elements" to sabotage the genuine fight for justice by the Ogoni society. A middle-aged participant expressed said this:

> The elders in Ogoniland can bear witness to so many things that has taken place here. We have learn [ed] the hard way in this [these] past years. We thought it was because of the military that we are suffering, but there is no difference with this democracy we see now. One thing I think we need to do is to fight with direction. Instead of allowing ourselves to be used [by the government and Ogoni politicians], our youth must be wise… (RFSK 09.09.2019).

It was evident from the views of participants above that the actions of government and the Ogoni politicians, have, in fact, conceal injustices, inequalities and discriminations which are the seedbeds for Ogoni struggle for of self-determination.

In support of the above idea, Zimmerman (1990) argues that disaffected youth can internalize a view of themselves as worthless, having experienced a learned helplessness. This creates a sense of disempowerment that is particularly felt by the youth. As the research findings show, the lack of trusting relationship between the government and within the Ogonis themselves is the cause of *internal* violence. However, we examined not only the root causes of these tensions between the youth and the forces mentioned, but also about collaboration, support networks, tactics, and strategies that are necessary to make their struggle successful not only in their fight with the government, but in everyday life.

If self-determination is to be considered, as explained earlier, a form of "collective existence", rather than a one-time political happening, then Ogoni youth ought to break away from the current crisis to embrace a more constructive approach, which can only be achieved in socially meaningful ways. That is, through group action in community - a thorough-going collective effort that spells out the criteria by which the defining characteristics of self-determination is accepted by majority of Ogonis. An objective approach that imbued MOSOP with the kind of mobilizing power in the early 1990s. As Stavenhagen (2017) opined, this is certainly what people around the world are striving for when they invoke the right to self-determination in their struggles. Respectively, an elderly and young participant converged:

> …If our youth can understand this- violence cannot solve our problems. Look at how it is creating more problem for us. How can we be fighting ourselves and then be blaming the government? I know it is the government doing it [dividing them to rule], but let us think… we must be one voice (RFADB 10.09.2019).

And,

> Those elders [those on the side of the government] must come together and do their work by advising the youth and directing them on what to do to fix our problem with the government as Ken [Saro-Wiwa] was doing (PCON 07/05/2018).

With the above reactions from participants, the shortcomings of Ogoni struggle for self-determination become evident- the increase in dissenting voices against socioeconomic inequalities and discrimination, and weakened community solidarity and the unequal power relations perpetuated by some Ogoni members. As we now know, the goal of the Ogoni mobilization is for the emancipation of the people, but the current events represent the extremes frustration and despair that has characterized much of what looks like the movement has been stalled. But to a large extent, majority of participants agreed with the idea that Ogoni's political power to help their struggle lies in their resolve for a constructive strategy of action

Thus, from participants' point of view, one can argue that their intervention is geared toward maintaining an important capacity to mobilize their support base as they continue to put pressure both on the government and corrupt elders in the movement. Majority of young people disagreed that using violence and, especially, destroying their property and causing harm to each other to solve their problems was justifiable.

Strategies for Renewed Enthusiasm for Constructive Social Action
Central to Ken Saro-Wiwa's writings is his demand for Ogoni's autonomy within the Nigerian state. In his effort to achieve this major task, he established the Ogoni indigenous movement- MOSOP based on a nonviolent approach to achieving justice. Since his approach has had enormous influence on the entire Ogoni people, the research explored how the succeeding generations-the current generation specifically, have expanded and enriched the 'new world'- the liberation and self-determination route Ken Saro-Wiwa created for Ogoni created. Rather than accepting the present tragic and hopeless socio-economic and political situation, it is obvious that participants resolved that there is need to engage the government dominant force against Ogoni. The opportunities to express themselves and to have their voices heard (Wyn & White 2000), and the need to be more creative for the purpose of achieving their goal.

Though it was difficult to get participants move away from 'grievance talk' in order to discuss strategies for social change, what came up quite often as a major obstacle for participants, as observed, was the government's political force and influence. There is no doubt that the impact of the young Ogoni MOSOP members is inspiring, but arguably they struggle to provide a course of

action for some who are motivated to pursue social change. The inconvenient truth is that social change is difficult and even more so for young people who wrestle with challenges related to experience and credibility. Emancipation is at the core of Ogoni's story. To be able to change their feelings of anger, sadness and hopelessness into concrete actions, participants discussed three strategies:

Education of the Ogoni masses

Participants pointed out that lack of education made Ogoni people vulnerable to various forms of exploitation and domination by the government and Ogoni elites. They argued that education would help them to overcome such oppression at a local level. For some participants, inadequate education was also a barring factor for Ogoni to participate effectively in socio-political and development affairs. The majority of community leaders who participated in the research argued that due to inadequate education, Ogoni people had long been treated by government and non-government development agencies only as subjects of development; they rarely had the chance to be proactively involved in development decisions. One participants in his mid-thirties, who had some experience of working with NGOs, said:

> …our people [Ogonis] have been the stereotypes as ignorant, timid and shy. In most cases we [the Ogonis] exhibit this nature due to different reasons. Most of our people in the villages find it difficult to communicate with outsiders due to lack of education. In the olden days, Ogoni people rarely ask questions; neither do they complaints about anything. It is different now… (FGJKPS 12/05/2018).

A majority of participants were pessimistic about their future if the current government status quo, which is serious lack of education of majority of young Ogonis. A good number concluded it is one of the causes of youth crisis, who due to lack of education are easily manipulated.

Another idea that came up in support of the above argument is government strategy of hand-picking some young Ogoni for scholarship in order to perpetuate the divide and rule strategy. Two participants in their mid-forties lamented about this:

> […] everything they [government and oil companies] are doing is manipulation. We know that they select their own interested people and give send them to school abroad. For me, I don't consider these people as Ogoni again, because they represent the government and not our people… (FGNCN 12.07.2018).

The other supported this:

> I agree with what my brother said. The scholarship business is useless. It is still the same style. They are using our resources to train their children and some of us who want to betray our own people… (FGBKL 12.07.2018).

From the presentation above, it is fair to conclude that [participants perceived that education would be instrumental for them to accommodate a modern way of living, particularly to access alternative means of livelihoods. For them education is the tool to salvage them from their persistent poverty and destitution. They perceived that they lacked adequate capacity (education), and so they failed to

access alternative means of livelihoods. Also, that lack of education is the reason that denies Ogoni the opportunity to represent their interests in political affairs. The following remarks of a female middle age participants vividly captured participants perspective with respect to education.

> We are behind because we lack education. If our kids get better education they can represent us in politics and other places [sectors] of our society, and it will create the way to improve our situation. Without better education, nothing can help us. (FGPPVBB 12.06.2018).

Though it was difficult for participants to come up with concrete measures, their traditional ways of reaching out to members in their communities were adopted as the best way to engage in this type of activism. They spoke concerning community forums (e.g. town hall meetings), peer-to-peer programmes and made reference to these as key factors that facilitated the success of Ken Saro-Wiwa's style of activism.

Demonstration and Protest

From participants' reflections, it is established that the Ogonis had a long socio-cultural tradition of collective action through various informal groups in the community to tackle their everyday life situations and community problems. In a focus group involving youth activists and leaders of MOSOP, participants were asked to share if they had any autonomous collective initiatives to address their perceived current problems. Most participants referred to demonstration as a strategy for collective action among Ogoni. Particularly, this referred to the 1993 Ogoni march mentioned in chapter 2. This was captured by one middle age MOSOP leader:

> Although we are always talking about freedom. People [some Ogonis] rarely take any advice seriously in practice. In my view, this is one of the fundamental reasons why the situation of Ogoni has not improved despite the number of years we have spent fighting. But there is no better strategy for us to adopt that is better than what happened in 1990 (FGPNG 09.05.18).

The above quote can be clearly understood from Klandermans' (1984) idea of protest. Protest, he says, starts with grievances in a society, and for grievances to become the driving force of collective action, the people involved must develop a politicized collective identity. Meaning, people must become aware of the fact that their grievances are shared with others, that opponents are defined and that attempts to generate public support are undertaken. It is

As argued in the thesis, the Ogoni struggle is a politicizes grievances as it is able to establish its case so strongly. To achieve success therefore, Ogoni must learn from Ken Saro-Wiwa's protest strategy, which became a global issue when the Ogoni concern crossed borders, as a means to continue to communicate it grievances (Meyer 2004). A young MOSOP member said:

> … I think it is important not to forget our background. Like joke, Ken [Saro-Wiwa] carried our problem to the outside world. We need to focus on that kind of approach… our situation is making things difficult but we must find a way to get everyone on board (PSPLJ 27.06.2018).

However, the Ogoni activists must examine their strength, their diversity and contentiousness, since

according to McAdam et al. (1996), the social movement sector is conceived of as a conglomerate of movement organizations, which provides the infrastructure on which protest is built (Diani and McAdam 2003). The Ogoni activists must adopt a long-term engagement against the loose informal engagements to generate a constructive strategy for positive outcome.

Running for office
With such a long history of discrimination as established in chapter 2, activism is essential in a society like ours. Participants engaged in strong debate on the possibility of having some members run for political offices for the sake of lobbying[270] the government on behalf of the movement. Participants were divided on this issue. Thus,

> MOSOP cannot work well if our members are allowed to do politics… (FGPKNY 02.06.2018).
>
> I think we have seen what is happening to us because of those people [some MOSOP members] who are into politics (PCNNG 07.05.2018).
>
> The way things are going, for me, I have no problem with our members joining politics. If our people are sincere, those who are there can fight for us… (FGBTB 29.04.2018).

Drawing from the above feelings of participants, it is obvious that some think MOSOP's association with politics will jeopardize their position, but for others, it will be the best 'new approach' to fighting the government that shows no sign of relenting in their suppression agenda. Although there was no clarity on the position of MOSOP as regards their participation in the Nigerian politics, majority felt, from their experience of their relationship with the government the strategy will weaken MOSOP's ability to resist government craftiness.

Connecting previous insights and evidence from participants quotes above, it is fair to conclude from some of the arguments put forward that the two roles overlap. MOSOP members alternate back and forth between activism and more conventional electoral politics. From my experience as a Nigerian, when activists become politicians, they tend to lose their former identity since politicians must compromise to get results. There are exceptions but they are rare. Though it is not unusual that democracy needs good activists and good politicians, it is difficult to reconcile the two within the context that the Ogoni participants argue. A situation where being a politician means conceding everything; where one is expected to advance the goals of politicians more than the rights of the people. In such context therefore, we need courageous activists with integrity and vision to push politicians and galvanize people for the purpose of social change.

Creating New Opportunities and Capacity for Self- Development and Self-determination
Following the research argument, Ogoni's engagement in resistance struggle is to enable them take control and make decisions that affect their lives. Thus, participants' discussion about Ogoni's self-development and self-determination exposed the high levels of inequities in Ogoniland. Some

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[270] Working within the system to try to change it.

participants shared the feeling that the circumstances of their lives and communities are beyond their control, majority believed being assertive and knowing their rights are the best ways to sustaining their struggle. Even though participants were at different levels of understanding, due mostly to their educational background, their coordination as regards explaining the Ogoni social reality was a major strength to their struggle.

Based on the arguments provided earlier, the PAR iterative and flexible approach, though not observed in the traditional sense due to security issues, focused on building on Ogoni existing local ability to solve problems, define and act upon the people's needs. Two elderly participants affirmed this:

> I consider ourselves [the Ogonis] as insiders, and some of us are lucky to witness this thing [government suppressive actions] for many years. Their [government and oil companies] are working for them, so we [elders] must try to do something that can help the youth to build our society back. I know it is difficult, but we can do it… (FGFGB 29.05.2018)

And,

> I believe in what our youth can do. If we are not serious and strong in defending ourselves, by now nobody will hear about us. So, we must help these youth to realize that what they are doing is bad. We the elders must give the youth the opportunity to concentrate on our fight… (FGTKBL 29.05.2018).

Looking at the quotes above, participants highlighted not only the challenges that the Ogoni people face, but also the need to be able to confront their differences, and to "tolerate each other" (PFTDGG 02.05.2018). The key to addressing this challenge lies in their ability to be conscious of their diversity by confronting the structures and practices from within that creates friction between and among them. Overall, participants observed it is necessary to provide the youth an opportunity to explore their hopes, celebrate their social identity and address their concerns by creating social action projects. One middle age MOSOP leader remarked:

> Continuous discrimination and suppression of the Ogonis for many years have created considerable apprehension in part of our community; because it is necessary to say that not all communities are into crisis. Therefore, building confidence among Ogoni people would be the foremost development priority for us (PFNG 16.04.2018).

There was widespread consensus among participants on the issue of social inclusion. For the youth to move away from risks and act for a better future, their power to make choices that reflects their interests, the prerogative to have some control over their own life, and the freedom to develop a vision for the future must be established. To allow them have some sense of self-determination will help them develop their Ogoni identity; a crucial catalyst of autonomy and a fundamental component as regards one's quality of life and his or her action in the society. One female participants reacted to this idea in these words:

> In my opinion, no one but only us [the Ogonis] can develop ourselves. We need to develop Ogoni leadership and ensure that we know what is happening in all the communities. like we discussed about our [women] workshop programs, it is the best way to catch these youth[s]. it is the best way to make

them feel they are part of the society. Let's not forget that some of them are under drugs… (PPBNK 02.05.2018)

From the above presentation, it is fair to say that participants realised that capacity building begins with a shared and explicit awareness of individual and the social issues surrounding the individual. By providing the youth with self-awareness programmes that will avail them the opportunities to shape their individual choices and be able to understand and respect differing perspectives. Considering their involvement in the Ogoni movement, this is to help them have a broader worldview and understanding of their personal and collective ability to change circumstances. In this case, the structural barriers that impede equitable access to their resources and opportunities are essential for their success.

The idea of capacity is essentially about the ability of Ogoni people to function effectively to influence the conditions of their communities in a practical way. Although capacity building is concerned fundamentally with investing in the peoples' capabilities, the development also requires the development of necessary resources.

Having heard participants' account of their long journey through political and economic upheavals, I cannot but recognize the creation of the Ogoni movement as a great achievement. Not less when we recognize from the testimonies of participants in this research, that irrespective of what the Ogoni society is still going through, majority have maintained a constant vision of their principal objectives and faith in their ability to ultimately achieve them.

As one participant asked during the research process: "with these conditions that we have found ourselves, how can we achieve anything"? (FGLSHF 15.07.2018). The question is important, not just for the sake of understanding the particular historical case of Ogoni, but to see if it provides any example as to how other groups might approach the enormous task of fighting oppression, violent regime and economic strangulation.

Thus, participants account suggests that while there are huge obstacles both from within and outside against the Ogoni movement, there is a vision of development that is shared by majority of Ogoni: that key to Ogoni development lay in their access to education and their resources.

Effect of the PAR Approach on the Ogoni Resistance
Relying on our explanation in chapter 3 and 4, PAR is a democratic research method appropriate for any social movement groups struggling for radical social change. The research established an understanding of PAR from the postmodernist tradition, which, according to Kelly (2005) embraces a dialectic of shifting understandings whereby multiple or shared realities exist; objectivity is impossible. While chapter 3 contextualized PAR in terms of its history, principles, strengths, and challenges, and why it was adopted to examine the Ogoni resistance, the empirical chapter show

how the research engaged in a systematic collection and analysis of data[271] for the purpose of taking action and making change (Greenwood & Levin 2006).

Thus, the qualitative PAR framework allowed participants and myself to explore Ogoni's socio-economic and political contexts, which according to my conclusions, shaped their experiences (McIntyre 2008) within the context of their resistance against the Nigerian state, which, according to (Okonta 2008:6) is "a predatory institution whose forms of rule, run against their own conceptions of authority and the norms and values that legitimise it". Below is a further discussion about the effect of PAR on participants of the research.

Developing Solidarity
One of the most crucial point the PAR process revealed is the connections and solidarities of Ogoni in resisting oppression and marginalization- the identification of their problems and their desires for social change. Participants engaged the process with different skills and positions, but the common thread was their desire to work together to confront and reverse the current oppressive structure, which has a common effect on the Ogoni society. To emphasize the need for solidarity, an Ogoni man in his fifties who is in favour of MOSOP members participating in politics claimed that mistrust among the community members was very high, preventing social solidarity. He shared:

> Traditionally Ogonis have a tendency to follow the local elites. But now, we lack mutual trust among our own brothers and sisters, and lack solidarity in the overall community. For example, last year we had an election for Ward Counsellor. In the election, most members of my community were involved. Unfortunately, we failed to elect the best candidate because our votes were divided (FGDPP 17.04.2018).

Even though participants' political worldviews were not the same, the discussion process enabled members to explore together how to offer both radical critiques and inspiring alternatives which are translatable and seem doable. Some participants acknowledged this:

> … we may be fighting, let's say, over land or I don't like your operations in MOSOP, but see how we are talking about our plans here… (FGPNBFB 12.06.2018)

> You can see us doing bad thing [s] against each other, but what I know is that Ogoni people are one (FGPFNY 02.06.2018)

> … our spirit to work together is stronger than the crisis. So, for me, I know it is just to get the right people to lead our fight… (FGLHN 12.06.2018).

These accounts reveal participants solidarity, which means their determination that goes beyond participation to producing contextually-relevant ideas that are useful for their struggles. This means that if real solidarity and mutuality is worked at, respectful critique and disagreement are inevitable. Solutions can be found to these that are beneficial for the group rather than simply reflecting the will of the most dominant members.

The research did not go as far as drawing out from participants proposals about specific tactics or

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[271] Through semi structured and focus group interviews

techniques, due to the shortcomings mentioned earlier about the security of the research context, but the research is explicit about Ogoni aims and desire to sustaining their struggle; developing an Ogoni solidarity is key to achieving success.

Challenging Power Relations

As the research has shown, there exist rigidity as regards social roles in the Ogoni society, which is reflected in their struggle. There are the elites and the common Ogoni people, as there are expert MOSOP leaders and local members in the villages. There is no doubt that this blinds members to the possibilities of common ground, and potential for transformative dialogue. The stratification of MOSOP with labels such as 'activist' sets certain people up as experts who feel they can contribute to social change more than others. An elderly participant shared his feelings:

> … when Ken [Saro-Wiwa] was leading us [Ogoni], there was no division in MOSOP like what we see today. You can see there is big gap between us… and it is some of us in the village [s] that suffer (FGPJDB 29.04.2018).

Considering the discussions in chapters 1 and 2, the above statement is inaccurate, because there is evidence that the same reality existed when Ken Saro-Wiwa led MOSOP. However, the argument by most participants is that there was more coordination between members of MOSOP across Ogoniland than it is currently. Thus, the transformative encounters that participants envisaged is similar to what Giroux (1988) has called 'border pedagogy' which eschews fixed notions of 'us' and 'them', but recognizes the many ruptures between groups, and embraces and questions differences and newness however shocking.

Challenging power relations means working with groups to uncover structures of power to empower people to take control of their own lives. This relates to Freire's (2000) pedagogical approach, which insist on the dialectical relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed. It is only through this dialectical relationship that we can unpack relationships and causalities which structure injustice. Freire's idea allows us to acknowledge that there is oppression and inequality, not merely external oppression of the 'other', but that we too are subject to oppression and that we subject others to it. Meaning, we are all in some ways oppressed and in turn oppressors. So, it is not just about how we think power works 'out there' if we overlook our role in reproducing power.

As I presented earlier, this was confirmed by woman participants who recognized Ogoni's role in perpetuating inequality and injustices, especially within MOSOP. How this affects their struggle is crucial. Hence, there is need to further examine the power relation issue so that members are empowered to challenge and confront these power relations. This is not an easy task.

From the discussion presented, the PAR process provided the space or opportunity for transformative dialogue, mutual learning, as well as challenging each other about their social world. However, one cannot deny that the space created did not also open up the possibilities for some participants to deceive and manipulate others, or to conceal information due to the insecurity situation in Ogoni. Sociologically speaking, these kinds of tendencies cannot be ignored since the society is a complex balance between difference, diversity and conflicts, and agreements and consensus.

This is essential and it justifies why PAR was adopted; to nurture creative interaction between members of the different communities in Ogoniland, which can lead to critical reflection and interventions. This is crucial for Ogoni activist. Rather than a conventional methodology, PAR seems to be an urgent methodological, as well as political imperative for the Ogoni struggle.

It is obvious especially in the descriptive and theoretical analysis chapters that PAR's democratic impulse, critical orientation and grass-roots action approach (Koch & Kralik 2006; MacDonald 2012) appealed to participants. It revealed how participants were active in making informed decisions (such as social cohesion and collective interest) throughout all aspects of the research process for the primary purpose of imparting social change. It helped participants to produce counter-stories[272] against the dominant narrative (which projects Ogoni as a violent group) created by the government.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the findings from the research data under the six themes identified in the data analysis. I have also discussed the four main research questions from the participants' viewpoints. For the entire discussion, I want to emphasize about my intervention or interpretation of the findings, which from the point of view of PAR, it is seen as tentative rather than conclusive. This opens up the possibility that the data may be interpreted differently by others. Zubin and Sutton (2014) summarized this: as researchers, we can display our findings and argue for their value, but with one hesitation, that they are never the complete truth.

However, for the fact that this was a participatory research and that I was an active participant taking responsibility for the process, I claim justification for the interpretation of the data. In this

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[272] e.g. their articulation of the human rights issues and how government and Shell have destroyed their environment

way, I have provided evidence of the achievement of improvements in my practice and in the experiences of participants. It is clear, therefore, that through the research process, I have enabled the transformation of their knowledge from one of marginalization and oppression to one of positive action for change. I contend, therefore, that I have fulfilled the research aim that I identified in chapter 1, that my research has begun to have an influence on the Ogoni struggle from the point of view of building strategies for change.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Limitations of the Research

I encountered a number of challenges whilst in the research field. The most obvious were the unstable political context of the entire environment due to oil exploration by the government; the internal violence in Ogoni communities caused by the cultists; and the repercussions on safety, morale and mobility especially across the five kingdoms where the research was carried out. For example, apart from the major insecurity situations (during my pilot investigation and when I was back to test the research result) that put a halt to the research process, there were some instances[273] that caused an inability to conduct fieldwork.

My constant wonder about protecting participant activists posed an added ethical concern. The key question here was the extent to which the volatile situation in Ogoni affected the PAR process, and whether it was possible to adapt to different and constrained socio-political contexts. Certainly, the volatile political environment, with outbursts of violence and conflict hampered the PAR process; around access, risk, ethics and our (participants and myself) social positioning (Wheeler 2013).

Although the research design was explicitly based on PAR methodology, it is important to highlight that in reality, the process went back and forth, particularly in terms of trying to build capacity to cope with the changing situation of the research field as mentioned above. Hence, maintaining flexibility was important in order to appropriately respond to the unstable nature of the research environment. Future research in such a sensitive environment should examine carefully the social science guidelines in order to confront such fears for the sake of internal and external validity.

Another significant challenge that manifested during the process (from the perspective of participants) were time constraints, which were also influenced by financial constraints and time-frames. Because I was also a novice researcher, I had doubts about the possibility of conducting a rigorous research that would produce credible findings as PAR needs more time to be put into practice for the sake of good research result.

As regards research data, I limited myself to the empirical evidence drawn from the three PAR research methods (semi-structured and focus group interviews and participant observations). Though the research used a substantial literature on the Ogoni situation, it is obvious that the lack of secondary qualitative data (e.g. documentary issues and newspapers - outlined in chapter 2) did not allow for a comparative perspective in relation to the events of the early 1990s and what is happening in Ogoni at present. If time and resources had allowed, a thorough exploration of

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[273] Especially when my gatekeeper suspected an interview venue was not safe for him due to the inter-communal differences

documentary and archival data might have enabled a deeper understanding of the historical dimension of the Ogoni situation. This is in relation to the overall ambition and the main purpose of the research to contribute to the debate about the Ogoni's resistance to the marginalisation meted on them by the government as a model for other minority ethnic groups in the country.

The research was an exploratory study with participants who were members of Ogoni society. Though interviews were carried out with a few non-Ogoni indigenes, 95% of those who participated in the research were members of the different communities from the five kingdoms where the research took place. As evident in the methodology chapters 3 and 4, the process was rigorous but it is important to state that the information collected from participants may have been impacted by unknown factors such as circumstances on participants' life at the time the interviews were carried out, or the security situation of a particular community.

In chapter 3, the research reported on the substantial number of participants who participated in the research process. However, the sample size of women was small. Even though there was a significant contribution from the limited number, I believe this has influenced the findings related to women in the research as it limits the scope of my analysis with regards to the relationship between women and men and about women's participation in MOSOP. However, as sample size is generally less relevant in qualitative research, especially in such a complex context like Ogoni, I was able to make assumptions, which I believe affected the result of the findings. In hindsight, I feel it would have been much more effective from the point of view of women's participation to have looked out for a woman gatekeeper as well.

Also, there was no single interview with members (male and female) of either of the cultist groups. Given the importance of cultism in Ogoniland, especially as it relates to the internal violence in Ogoni communities, I have to acknowledge that the discussion on cultism in the research drew on reports and perspectives of non-members and from my assumptions. This, undoubtedly, has limited the research results and constrained the possibility of representation of this group in the research.

What was Learned in the PAR Process

According to Coghlan and Brannick (2005); McNiff and Whitehead (2011); Reason and Bradbury (2008) there are two main issues at stake in PAR: the development of practical knowledge through approaches that are highly participatory and the attempt to democratise knowledge and to use it to pursue practical solutions to issues of concerns to individuals and communities. This simply means that the practical value of action research links development theory with practice through the efforts of a community of inquiry (McNiff & Whitehead 2011).

The PAR study process had a number of tangible benefits for the research participants and myself as the researcher. Using evidence from our field discussions and my observations, it is fair to claim that the process was an effective learning tool because it allowed us examined the Ogoni real-life experience. It helped participants to reflect on the social, economic and political inequalities and environmental destruction in Ogoni, and also, to discuss about the knowledge and skills needed to solve their problems. I have outlined some points (in relation to practice) below - what we have learned from Ogoni through PAR and what others can learn from the Ogoni experience.

What can be Learned for Ogoni

As described in chapter 3, research participants came from across the five kingdoms of Ogoni. In each, they included youth, middle age and elderly men and women, students and MOSOP leaders. Thus, the PAR lessons learned from the research process are not just for a particular category of the Ogoni population but for all. The PAR study helped participants to discuss their Ogoni socio-cultural values; their sense of community/identity, and the need to encourage friendly behavioural changes in others. It allowed them to discuss the need for collective approach for their struggle.

Capacity strengthening for PAR was viewed as an ongoing process, responsive to the learning and experience gained through application and reflection. Learning in the project was identified as most effective when it was experiential, that is, a blend of training and coaching with the time and space for young people to apply the new skills and knowledge and reflect on the impact of that application. The opportunity to apply learning and make a tangible difference was seen to be an empowering process for participants.

From the evidence and analysis presented in chapters 3, 4 and 5, it is obvious that participants' involvement in the generation of knowledge for action is an important step to strengthen the Ogoni struggle, and hence for change. During sessions with participants, they agreed that PAR was a distinctive research approach. They saw more value in PAR than traditional academic research, simply because it focused on solving the Ogoni problems and for the fact that it concentrated on building knowledge for the action most needed at this time in their struggle. In other words, the process revealed how the power of PAR rested on the ability to extract knowledge that is locally derived and relevant. They confirmed this by describing the process as 'better', in terms of creating the opportunity to influence positive change, as opposed to traditional research which is completely disconnected from people's lived realities (McTaggart 1994; Maguire & Brydon-Miller 2009).

The majority of participants discussed how the current MOSOP approach is detached from the movements' purpose. By contrast, the research has produced evidence about the transformative effects of PAR. Thus, there is a need to incorporate participatory approaches as a pre-step to MOSOPs' campaigns and programmes. This will definitely lead to effective planning as regards

interventions and the ability to influence change. As revealed in the analysis chapter, PAR has the capacity to make the Ogoni struggle more credible, and will allow activists to engage with the government with more confidence.

Drawing from participants' reports of the government's interference with Ogoni social cohesion, their collaborative way of working and consensus building within groups during the research process showed new ways of working, which were horizontal and mutually respectful. It encouraged a transparent mutually respectful way of working, as well as challenging embedded power dynamics, not only within the groups, but also within the wider Ogoni coalition. Participants referred to the importance of democratic practice within groups where members are equal decision-makers in the research process. Also, they were pleased to be given a say at every stage of the research and to realise that decisions were not determined centrally by leaders or a single person but were the results of a shared process. Here are some comments from participants:

> [PAR] increased my confidence and gave me courage to speak more about our problem and what we can do about it (PVGK 01/06/2018)

> It was new to us to speak with men especially at home [grassroots level]. This kind of exposure to all kinds of women give [gives] us idea [greater insight] and confidence in representing ourselves in this way [through participatory process] (PCNNG 07.05.2018).

> Though I consider myself already empowered, since I participated in the action research process, I feel more empowered because I know how I can confront our enemies [Government/Shell] with a strong case based on evidence (PBWK 12.05.2018).

It is fair to say that these expressions of change indicate a significant level of self-perceived personal transformation and confidence at the individual level (Bergold & Thomas 2012). The space given for each participant to share their view on the research topic indicates this shift towards giving power to the people in shaping the programme rather than it being dictated to them.

This self-actualised change expressed by some participants, which is transformative and empowering, is seen in their personality, knowledge, how they tackle problems and deal with other members within the movement. These, I felt, were influenced by being part of the PAR democratic process. They learned that their collective action, for example, had greater impact in terms of their ability to persuade and discuss their issues. Thus, learning from the findings and analysis, suggests that PAR is an appropriate and beneficial methodology to use in this research context.

What we can Learn from the Ogoni Experience
If I had just simply read about the Ogoni issue from secondary sources, I do not think I would have internalised the problem as much, and taken it seriously, but after conducting the research and seeing how participants understood their social reality and engaged in the process of exploring ways to tackle their problem, I worked to learn from alternative explanations for the events and experiences of the Ogoni people. Importantly, conducting this research enabled me to internalise

how participants' individual actions were connected to larger social, economic and political problems in Ogoni. Also, despite the challenges, there is evidence that the participatory approach adopted, provided a way of knowledge creation that extracts information from participants.

Although all minority ethnic groups experience inequalities, the indigenous Ogoni people in Nigeria seem to experience the most severe violent oppression and marginalisation. Thus, this research has explored the source of violent oppression and marginalisation against Ogoni and their resistance. From the lessons learned from the research process, I would like to highlight two points, which are crucial and resonate for people who are interested in the Ogoni struggle - historical oppression and resilience and resistance.

Historical Oppression- Although Paulo Freire's (2000) work originally focused on his experiences in Brazil it is important to highlight that his perspective can usefully be applied to current indigenous peoples' struggle, including the Ogoni case in Nigeria. This is because the focus is on how colonial and historical oppression is consolidated through internalised oppression and self-perpetuating (i.e. through horizontal violence and sub-oppression - see chapter 6) (Burnette 2015). This reflects Fanon's (1970, 1968) idea that decolonization can never be successful if the only visible change is the replacement of whites by people of colour. Decolonization processes must deal with the personal and national consciousness as well. Meaning, we must free ourselves in order to be able to develop our minds. Thus, the local elites created by colonial power, who think and act like Europeans and who have Western interests at heart must crumble. It means that the imposition of choices and values contrary to the views of the Ogoni are issues of main concern (Freire 2000).

What we have learned from the Ogoni situation is that their experience of chronic oppression for decades has, in some way, made the people feel resigned and helpless in relation to how they can effect change. As the research findings established, the experience has entrenched mistrust, and understandably insecurity among the members of the society. From the findings, it is possible also to assert that some members feel that they lack the power to change the oppressive structure, and as a result, we see the tendency to strike out at those of equal or less power (e.g. women and youth) through horizontal violence (Freire 2000). This idea explains how and why oppressed people oppress their own members.

Resilience and Resistance- Compared with other communities in the Niger Delta, one can argue (from the evidence in chapter 4 & 6) that the resilience and resistance of the Ogoni struggle speaks of their capacity to sustain their social activism. To overcome oppression, the Ogoni activists identified the causes of their problems and created the space for reflection and critical dialogue that will hopefully lead to social action that will change the structures of inequalities. Their constant reference to Ken Saro-Wiwa and MOSOP revealed their resistance to a nation-state that does not

favour everyone in the country. Thus, their participation in the research is a clear demonstration of Ogoni's resilience and resistance to oppression despite the adversity imposed by the Government/Shell.

Decades of oppression have constrained the Ogoni people, but, as the PAR study has demonstrated, the constraint has provided the opportunity to develop ingenious skills to resist oppression. Involved in the campaign for social change, the Ogoni society has faced enormous challenges. Almost on a daily basis, they experience injustice, loss, and suffering, which match with their own responses: fears, frustrations and anger. It becomes necessary, therefore, to underline the fact that this research has helped participants to dialogue on how best they can work creatively to find resources and skills as well as strategic thinking and development of tactics that can make their action more effective and sustainable.

With the above explanation, I adopt Gramsci's (1971) idea of 'pessimism of the intellect'- to avoid wishful thinking and face reality as squarely as possible. He maintains, however, that it also contains an 'optimism of the will', an inner conviction that things can be different. Thus, by holding optimism and pessimism in tension, 'sustainable activism' is better able to handle despair; it does not create the space for binary thinking as a way of engaging with reality.

For those who subscribe to 'sustainable activism', it is never too late to arrive at one's set goals. The Ogoni struggle has demonstrated this and from the research findings and analysis, we can say that some irreversible processes of change are already happening- the movement's relentless engagement with the government since the early 1990s (which facilitated the United Nations investigation: UNEP 2011) and networking with other movement groups. This justifies the idea that PAR is a tool for continuous service improvement, which can identify systemic and structural barriers leading to improving the situations of people involved. In this context as well, PAR has helped build the evidence base needed for Ogoni activists to continue with their demand for change.

PAR is critical and works with complexities and principles- To be critical does not mean to be negative. Using Wadsworth's (1997:31) position, it means, in this context, questioning or 'self-sceptical'. It means that we recognise that people's situations are not only a result of their own actions and relationships, but arise from the social and economic structures around them. PAR researchers must also be aware that PAR appreciates that some people get less say in things than others and that the people who are most affected should have a voice and a role in the process of working out what to do. Hence, PAR is underpinned by values of relationship, inclusion and justice. So, critical reflection includes examining our own assumptions and norms, appreciating the nature

of participants' interests and acknowledging the broader systemic factors that maintain vulnerability which undermines the wellbeing of particular individuals and groups as in the case of Ogoni.

PAR provides a tool that is suited to this challenge of engaging with complexity, so we not only identify what might work for people, but also what barriers exist in particular contexts. It is, therefore, important not to underestimate the challenges inherent in applying PAR to social situation, particularly like the Ogoni case where participants are economically and or socially marginalised. As captured by Wadsworth (1998:11)… "the more disempowered you are, the less hope you may have about either the value of participating or even the chances of something good coming out of it". So, PAR researchers need to engage in such research with a self-critical eye and a deep regard for the complexities, histories, diversities and cultures of the environments.

As I discussed in chapters 3 and 4, for traditional scientific research, 'truth' may be thought of as 'objective', existing out there not coloured with bias, and able to be repeated under the same conditions. Thus, to claim that knowledge generated is valid and able to be generalised, scientific research must be 'rigorous'. As the research analysis and findings chapters have shown, 'truth' in PAR is not seen as objective and able to be generalised, but is embedded in a particular local context, involving jointly developed understandings among a group of participants and generated by trying particular strategies and watching what happens (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Poth 2018; Van Maanen 1995; Etherington 2007).

In PAR, rather than pursue rigour in the scientific sense, you need to maximise how well founded, or 'trustworthy' your insights and actions are. It means that understandings that are well-founded in a particular context may change over time as the context itself changes. Hence, PAR is about asking questions in a particular context and trustworthiness is about the extent the answers you come up with fits that context (Stringer 2007; Wadsworth 1998).

Again, as discussed in chapter 4, PAR cannot be imposed because it is conducted by both the researcher and participants; the co-construction of knowledge (Selener 1997; Koch & Kralik 2006). To be successfully incorporated as an element of practice, it was clear that the research required the support and contribution of different participants who tailored the research to their particular context. Let us not, however, assume that things just happened. The fundamental issue here is about understanding the potential strengths and resources that can be mobilized for a PAR process, to focus on participants' capacities and potentialities. In this context, listening to the strengths of participants motivated them to participate. This enabled me to positively engage with participants and the unique contribution they made to the research. It is important to point out that collaborative

work also needs to acknowledge the constraints that are operating in any given context so you can work within them, or develop strategies in response to them (O'Hara & Weber 2006; Healy 2014).

Contributions of the Research

According to Herr and Anderson (2005), doctoral students using PAR must legitimize the approach in their examiners' eyes because many academics are not impressed by the locally grounded and practical knowledge generated by PAR. Moore (2004) argues further, that there is also a perceived danger that examiners may assess the rigour of PAR study using conventional criteria. Of course, these concerns are genuine and question PAR's contribution to academic knowledge. What is crucial here is that the successful reception of any doctoral thesis depends on selecting supervisors and examiners who are sympathetic to the approach taken (Klocker 2012). As Maguire (1993) argues however, this is critical for all doctoral students, whether attempting PAR or not.

In this case, however, the anticipated conflict between PAR and what is referred to as 'real' (Klocker 2011) academic knowledge is not an issue. Apart from the fact that my supervisor (who is an expert in PAR methodology) knows about the academic credibility associated with PAR, the presentation of my research process and findings contribute to two fields of knowledge: firstly, the reflexivity and acknowledgement of my subjectivity and also attentiveness to power differential and contextual specificity; and, secondly, that the PAR process will not only empower the Ogoni movement but other minority grassroots movements across the country and beyond.

Recognising my background as a priest and that my research also aims to facilitate my own future ministry, it is important for me to state that the hours spent building and sustaining meaningful relationships and engendering social change are not to be taken for granted. Although PAR studies are often treated with disdain in the academy and ascribed the status of 'community housework' (Hubbard 1996), and also labelled as 'insufficiently theoretical' (Klocker 2011), I agree with Pain (2009:84) that "excellence and participatory activism are not opposing poles". Moving away from the above discourse let me indicate, that my engagement with PAR has impacted on my priestly vocation. The challenges I faced, particularly in relation to my research environment and process, have informed my future engagement in relation to working with people and in such a democratic space as shown in this research. The research findings contradict the widespread assumption that marginalised peoples are ignorant and disempowered requiring external interventions.

The conceptual and empirical frameworks have shown how PAR is capable of helping people to gain control over their lives in a marginalised and disabling environment. However, a number of challenges have also been highlighted. In the context of the great need for sustainable solutions to the many problems caused by the activities of Shell in Ogoni, I believe that this study has made a

worthwhile contribution by analysing the PAR process in its implementation, exploring its impact on empowerment, and highlighting the challenges encountered in the process. In fact, it will be a great reference point for PAR researchers.

Recommendations for further Research

PAR methodology offers an exciting alternative to the more conventional controlled top-down, research approaches, and holds out the possibility of achieving more effective and sustainable outcomes for communities, like the marginalised Ogoni community explored. However, as this research has highlighted, there are many challenges involved in carrying out the PAR process. Relying on the research findings I have outlined some recommendations for future research:

Promoting participation among the disempowered - as a collaborative inquiry process, participants' active participation is key as regards their empowerment. However, people in marginalised or oppressed situations are unlikely to participate unless they are convinced that their security is guaranteed. Also, giving some kind of compensation or reward for participants' 'contribution to the research' contradicts the PAR principle of participants building knowledge for their own benefit. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that people in such situation (mostly poverty-stricken) ask for such benefits for the sake of their survival.

Both cases can be problematic for a researcher. In the first instance, a researcher must carry out a thorough pilot investigation in order to be familiar with the research terrain and the position of the research population. On the other hand, many research projects, like this one, lack the budget to give significant financial compensation. I, therefore, recommend that research in such circumstances should consider how people can be attracted to participate. This could involve pilot studies to investigate how people's motivation is affected by non-material benefits, and how these could be related to potential participants.

Power relations in PAR - allowing participants to take over control is an important objective of PAR, as it is through this process that the participants are empowered and given the opportunity to learn new skills. However, in this study, this process was sometimes hindered by a number of problems, including fear of being victimised by fellow participants or government security agents, resistance from the participants and their lack of confidence in themselves. I recommend therefore, that further research should focus on how this process can be effectively implemented and how the barriers such as low self-efficacy can be overcome.

Sensitivity to research environment and people - people interested in working in Ogoni and in related environments must be aware of, and be sensitive to the experiences of group members and

how it impacts their social behaviour. For example, a majority of participants indicated that being discriminated against has affected their lives negatively. Researchers must be aware that people who feel this way may have certain ways to present themselves in order to protect themselves.

Methodological concern - one of the lessons I learned was the impact the research process had on participants' reflection on their social world, particularly for the youth, who, as earlier discussed, reflected upon the implications of NGOs' actions on their lives and on the entire society. It was obvious that the majority saw the need for aid organizations interested in assisting the Ogoni people to change some aspects of their approaches to embrace a people-centered approach to development. Thus, those interested in funding projects in Ogoniland should build in needs assessment plan, which I think will bring constructive change in the area of development in Ogoniland.

Summary and Conclusion

PAR is a way for people to gain support from others facing similar issues and challenges (Bergold & Thomas 2012; MacDonald 2012). It was from this premise that I sought to embrace a participatory action approach to conducting research with the marginalised Ogoni people. In doing so, I attempted not only to address the rights of the oppressed Ogoni people to be involved in directing and shaping their own research but hoped that it would be relevant, effective and empowering for them. As pointed out by Whyte (1993), participation seems to be a process that takes place within the limits of participants and local conditions but can be nurtured and supported through planned interventions.

This research drew on the PAR methodological framework of researchers (e.g. Fals Borda 1979, 1991; Maguire 1987, 1993; Hall 1982, 1975, 1992, 1990; Freire 2000, 2007) to engage in critical reflexive practice, which enabled me to not just do PAR, but explore how PAR with marginalised people is done. Hence, critical reflexivity was employed and it helped both participants and myself to examine the institutional structures and processes that support the socio-economic and political inequalities in Ogoni. Through embracing critical reflexivity as a resource (Bergold & Thomas 2012) it has provided an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of how to pursue a social justice agenda more effectively.

The findings from this research indicate that the key to addressing the challenges of maximising empowering outcomes in research with marginalised people lies in the ability of participants and researchers to recognise and confront discrimination or prejudice[274] and other oppressive structures and practices. Particularly, it highlights the need to identify our own assumptions and attitudes, and

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[274] e.g. sectional political and gender equality issues in the Ogoni context

acknowledge how they impact on our practice. Ongoing critical reflexivity, in this research, enabled me to identify and explore some of the challenges as they emerged. It also developed my understanding of how these challenges could reinforce the tendency to victimise people, thereby hindering attempts to do research in empowering ways. Until we recognise this, PAR study and practice may not be meaningful and empowering for marginalized people like the Ogonis.

This research highlights the nature of PAR's transformative approach, and builds upon current literature to suggest that, in attempts to do research and engage marginalized or oppressed people in empowering ways it can also serve to disempower. However, critical reflection was crucial for this research for the sake of personal and social change (Maguire 1987; McIntyre 2008; Selener 1997). The PAR approach was concerned with empowering the poor and marginalized members of the Ogoni society - improving and informing social, economic, and political change through the collaboration of members and transformation of societal structures and relationships. Maguire (1987:29) emphasised that PAR is "a way for researchers and oppressed people to join in solidarity to take collective action, both in short and long term, for radical social change".

In adopting the PAR approach, I was conscious of the fact that our quest to do PAR in the 'right' way (Reason 1994) and the preoccupation with searching for the elusive 'ideal' (Baum et al. 2006; Bergold & Thomas 2012) form of participation is often based on assumptions about the best ways to participate. This can lead to exclusionary processes, and can also divert attention away from the most important aspect of participation.

According to Primavera and Brodsky (2004) PAR is a 'messy' activity. Thus, the reality of the PAR approach is such that, as one is trying to conduct research, he or she is, at the same time, trying to learn from it and adapt the research process as it is going forward. As Wadsworth (1997) opined, PAR is not only research that is followed by action; it is action that is researched, changed, and re-researched within the research process by the participants. In this research, this 'messiness' was compounded in my case by the fact that the primary aim of the research was to explore the process of the research itself. I embraced the 'messiness', and sharing my experiences of it hopefully offers a valuable insight for potential PAR researcher towards establishing standards of best practice.

My Future Plan
As I reflected in chapter 1, this research project was born out of my personal experience, particularly, the experience I gained from my 13 years working as a religious missionary priest with oppressed and marginalized people in rural communities. As such, I loved the PAR philosophy when I was introduced to it after my first PhD meeting with my supervisor. My understanding and adoption of the PAR methodology, allowed me to see why it is the best approach to enable me understand the social reality I was out to investigate. I was intrigued when I realized it will also

allow participants to discuss their struggle and pave ways as regards their future resistance to oppression. Thus, relying on the knowledge and experience of the Ogoni participants as a primary source of information, a concrete picture of their situation and, also of other minority communities in the country emerged.

As a Catholic priest, the PAR approach has moved me to appreciate the interpretation of Liberation Theology[275] (Gutierrez 1973; Boff & Boff 1987), which grew from the experience and reflection of priests, pastoral workers and nuns working with the poor in South America in the 1960s. Liberation Theology recognizes a need for liberation from any kind of oppression- political, economic, social, sexual, racial and religious. It opts for social change - the actualization of the ability of human beings to take charge of their own destiny.

This information is interesting because some Church hierarchy[276] have not yet embraced the principle of the theology of liberation: namely, the primacy of praxis over the abstract contrasts with the Catholic orthodoxy. The reality is that many people (mostly my brother priests) wondered why, as a priest, I decided to do a research on social movement. This speaks directly to one of the difficulties I encountered throughout the research process, mostly from some priests in Nigeria who thought that priests should adhere strictly to canon law. However, the PAR experience helped me to develop a new sense of mission and responsibility towards the increasing poor and marginalized who are left at the margins of our society. The PAR process has schooled me to live the Christian theological praxis, which is about how the gospel of Jesus Christ is to be lived in the world. It requires walking with and being committed to the plight of the poor (see Gutierrez 1984:37-8)

The PAR relational approach to knowledge creation and social change has helped me to see how translatable and practical the cyclical improvement process really is. I have found the process meaningful and inspiring, both professionally and personally. The research process provided me with the structure to think collaboratively and politically about the ways in which people's traditional cultural resources might assist them in dealing with challenges in the present. I am confident that the process has informed and shaped my future development work in the field as a missionary-activist priest.

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[275] I explained this in chapter 4, but it is important for me to mention the reaction of the Catholic Church to the Theology of Liberation. The Church (specifically, the late Pope John Paul II) objected to the highly politicized form of liberation theology prevalent in the 1980s, which could be seen as a fusion of Christianity and Marxism. It believed that the Church was turned into a secular political institution and the image of Jesus as a political revolutionary was inconsistent with the Bible and the Church's teachings. It accused the proponents of creating a Marxist utopia, engaging in partisan politics and inciting revolutionary violence. The movement was caricatured in the phrase *If Jesus Christ were on Earth today, he would be a Marxist revolutionary* (see BBC on Liberation Theology http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/christianity/beliefs/liberationt...). That is, some see the convergence between the Marxist analysis and the original Christian ideals. Both ideologies are striving for a utopia, one for a classless society, the other for a Kingdom of God.

[276] Especially in Africa where I will be working as a missionary-activist in the area of social and community-rural development

This research outcome is a viable and useful tool for my future work. Even though the security situation in Ogoni did not allow me access to the field to take the issues further, I hope to find a way of bringing the findings to the people. As I take up my responsibility of establishing a development office in the Gambia (for my religious congregation) at the beginning of 2021, the outcome of this research will be a good resource[277] for my work with the marginalized Gambian rural communities and across Africa.

Future Plan for Ogoni

As I have argued in this thesis, since independence what has characterized the Ogonis in their concrete and historical setting is a continuous struggle for liberation from socio-economic and political ills; freedom from economic dependence, direct and structural violence, oppression and marginalization. Also, the struggle has been a yearning for self-determination and integral development. The Ogoni agenda, therefore, is to reassert themselves as the master and main controller of their world. Hence freedom is a prime value and the theme of their everyday language.

The empirical evidence revealed Ogoni's capacity and resilience in the face of government and the multinational oil companies coordinated, brutal and repressive tactics to silence the peoples struggle for survival. Through the PAR process, the Ogoni participants were able to discuss how their demands (centered on justice, equity and development) were formulated, which is their attempt to redefine the oppressive structure. Evidently, the process empowered them by bringing them together and making them participants in the elaboration of a collective project based on their own aspirations as valuable ideas to foster their own development.

For the Ogoni participants, the PAR approach allowed them to explore their practices; the opportunity to relate the concepts of participation, complexity and change with their current struggle for the good of their movement going forward. Thus, the value of this work, in their knowledge as regards resistance to oppression, remains a reference point for their discussions about strategies and methods; coordinating their capacity and coping capacity to deal with the internal and external forces that are barriers for their future action as their fight for justice continues.

Finally, I consider it necessary to make available the result of my research to the Ogoni participants who contributed to the research process, for the benefit of Ogoni society. This will be in a concise and understandable form, for the sake of the non-academic Ogoni audience. This will be in-person or through email, subject to the security situation in Ogoni.

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[277] The idea of taking charge, exploring and building strategies for personal, social and community development

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Boxes and Appendixes

Box 1: Orthographies

Orthographies	Examples from Data
Cut-in	**AN:** By whom? Who were the people who settled… **PSMG**: (Cuts in…) the council of chiefs and the council of elders and the issues were not political issues. They were not environmental degradation issues caused by Shell in collaboration with the federal government. **AN:** Now, MOSOP and the people… **PSMG:** Cuts in… They're distractions to what MOSOP is doing.
False start	**AN:** And are you referring to Ogonis who are members of these political parties? **PNSKM:** Ok, ok yes…yes… The Ogonis and the Rivers…
Giggles.	(mmm…mmm….) **PSMG:** Yes. So, all these groups, information is been circulated through the same system the same way to even the common man in the house. **AN:** Hmmm. Okay.
Inaudible words and editing of transcript.	(…) **PBWK:** No! That's... We were attacked. -----we went to Bori we were received… **PLDBK:** It's a pleasure… you, and I wish you the best! **AN:** **PNSKM:** Okay. Thank you. Good afternoon Father, I am…, from Mogho community in Gokana. I a member of and… of St. … Church Mogho. So, you're welcome.
Continuing intonation	(,) **PNSKM:** Yes, it will work and whereby we have some of them that are not completely healthy, they should take them to psychiatric hospitals, test them, if the situation they have on each of them or one, are demand for medical care, they should be able to do that.
Inverted commas used for reported speech	(" ") "There was mutual relationship between all the Ogonis" (FGPULB). "Prior to this time, in our early days, we discovered that the Ogoni people love themselves, they were very friendly…" (PLDBK).

Transcripts	Codes
PSMG: There was mutual relationship between all the Ogonis. In fact, there was a very good relationship between the Ogoni people. **PLDBK:** Prior to this time, in our early days, we discovered that the Ogoni people love themselves, they were very friendly… **PVFVL:** … I know quite well that before this time, our forefathers lived in unity and there was a very great cordiality among them to the extent that they were able to stay together in a place. **PTSB:** …Life in Ogoni was simple, peaceful and fine.	Social relationship Social nexus (Interpretive) Unity Ogoni uniqueness Organised society Mutual relationship Real Ogoni
PLMK:…They see us primitive back in the years and they don't believe that sometimes, anything good can come out of that area… **PVGK:** … The people live in abject poverty and they have this sense that when they live in abundance, going by what God has deposited in their land, the oil crude and why should they in the midst of all these be poor? **PFNG:** … we have lived under military rule for a long time and under military rule you found high level of I mean freedom been restricted. **FGPLMB:** The same thing just as in politics as in MOSOP. In politics women are not allowed even to be given chance and in MOSOP, have not heard a woman being a president or occupy a higher seat. So, the women are being marginalised.	Marginalisation Political marginalisation Deprivation Oppression Shame Helplessness Alienation
PSKMG: now it's very funny to find out that ehh leaders of gangs, cult groups have political offers easily (interrupt: Okay!) That's the major cause of the violence in Ogoni. **PVGK:** …that sense of been cheated is one of the things that also give rise to the conflict. **PFNG:** …politics and private interest destroying the foundation of Ogoni society. people are beginning to sponsor young people into violence just to win elections… **PJOE:**…Young people who are frustrated, and they are mobilised and used as weapons of violence against their opponents and so… **FGPFNY:**…you see, violence came into Ogoni primarily from, the kind of violence we see today came in when there was an uprising against Shell… **PFTDGG:** …Dey jus fom a grup, dey cal it deebam n deewell. Dem get dere oga oga wey dey.	Conflict Political violence Political influence Propaganda Youth violence Sense of insecurity Cultism and violence Culture of violence (Interpretive) Insecurity Ogoni underworld (Interpretive)
PFNG: Yes. that is what, that is one of the things that have really distorted the Ogoni society today because we now have people pitched against each other based on political differences. **FGPFDFP:** …Shell is known for a kind of divide and rule tactics. If they want to get something they pick a few people, they give them money… **FGPGDP:**…some of the politicians are using our boys to cause commotion in the communities. But sometimes, they will use them to achieve their goals…	Divide and rule Internal division Corrupt chiefs Internal colonialism (Interpretive) Disunity Factions amongst the Ogonis Weak traditional set up Compromise vultures
PFNG: "… nothing is working in this Ogoniland… how long are we going to stay like this? ... Yes. The Ogoni struggle was launched for the freedom of Ogoni. Political freedom, economic freedom. that's basically what inspired the Ogoni struggle. **FGPMGP:** …solution is that the Ogoni environment should be cleaned up, should be restored and people should equally be empowered, not by giving them cash, but with basic training… **FGPGDP:** The strategies we can use to get these boys out of these cult activities is by creating job, giving them entrepreneurship developments. **FGPFNY:** …The solution that I see that will address this problem most likely is there must be a state for the Ogoni because with a state for the Ogoni	Political freedom Economic freedom Autonomy Self-determination (Interpretive) Awareness Empowerment Aspiration (Interpretive) Compensation Development strategy

Box 3a: Definition and Labels for Some Selected Themes

	Definition and Labels	Selected Themes
	"*There was mutual relationship between all the Ogonis*" (FGPULB). "*Prior to this time, in our early days, we discovered that the Ogoni people love themselves, they were very friendly…*" (PLDBK). This speaks of participants' feeling of nostalgia; their experiences of Ogoni society in the past and highlights the present tensions in relating with the imposed culture of violence. The feeling of alienation suggests participants' feelings of fear, exclusion, not belonging and living in an uncertain environment. The feeling of feeling of anger explains their reaction to the external force in whom they are disappointed. Participants' did not find it difficult to share their grievances, but at the same time show how they have internalized and accepted responsibility for the current difficulties in the Ogoni society. Obviously, participants' did not accept the Shell/Nigeria framed life style that does not match with their Ogoni social life.	*Social relationship; Ogoni Source of Mobilization*
	"*…It appears that it is a deliberate government policy to force poverty on the people so that they can break that resistance because the people will not look at the options, how do we get out of this situation…*" (FGPFNY). "*… They see us primitive back in the years and they don't believe that sometimes, anything good can come out of that area…*" (PLMK). "*…that sense of been [being] cheated is one of the things that also give rise to the conflict.*" (PVGK:) "*…Young people who are frustrated, and they are mobilised and used as weapons of violence against their opponents and so…*" (PJOE). Explains the extent to which participants' were out and open to speak about the inflicted harm by the oppressive structure on the Ogoni culture and environment. The justification of what gives rise to youth engagement in violent activities in Ogoniland. Participants' feel this could be avoided. This shows the way participants expressed the systematic disadvantage that they face. Continually, participants expressed their dissatisfaction over the inequalities that they face even though their environment produces crude oil for the country. Participants did not accept the situation as a normal part of life, hence their show of resistance to the unjust structure forced on them.	*Political and economic marginalization of Ogoni.* *Structural violence* *Divide and Rule*
	"*It was MOSOP that really exposed us much…. we have been living peacefully within ourselves and our neighbours until when the Ogonis realised the inequalities within the Nigerian system when Oil was discovered in Ogoniland… Since then it hasn't been the same. Seems the multinational oil companies were always interested in coming to pick the oil and drilling our oil. They cart away the wealth and leave behind the wastes. Until when MOSOP, when Ken Saro-Wiwa came up with the new idea, with the revolution to the system, to tell us that this is not what it is supposed to be because he travelled worldwide and saw what is happening in other countries even as practiced by Shell. But what he saw in Nigeria was different from what was happening in other countries. And he came to say no, this is not what it is supposed to be, this is what is obtainable in other countries, so why don't you replicate that in Ogoniland. And that seemed to have brought the problem between the Ogonis and the Federal Government and Shell*" (PCNNG). The extract captures about the Ogoni grievances triggered by the illegitimate state controlled of the proceeds of their oil. It show how the Ogoni grievance went beyond the Nigerian Government that is landlord to Shell. The	*MOSOP: Articulation of Ogoni grievances*
.	"*The Ogoni struggle was launched for the freedom of Ogoni. Political freedom, economic freedom. That's basically what inspired the Ogoni struggle*" (PFNG). "*… The solution that I see that will address this problem most likely is there must be a state for the Ogoni because with a state for the Ogoni*" (FGPFNY) Centres on participants' resistance to the idea of development forced on them irrespective of their demands. Participants want to be heard and allowed to take responsibility as regards management of their resources for the good of their society. However, they felt limited by the current imposed non-effective approach.	*Freedom and development*

	Themes	Subthemes
1.	*Social relationship: Ogoni source of mobilization*	a) Transgenerational memories: we are Ogoni. b) Ogoni Consciousness: Change the Ogoni story c) We are our watchmen/women
2.	*Political and economic marginalization of Ogoni:* *Divide and Rule: a repressive tactic against Ogoni* *Structural violence*	a) Post-Colonial politics b) Military occupation of Ogoniland c) Discriminatory politics: d) The Ogoni underworld- youth at risk e) No justice, no peace- youth coping strategies
3.	*MOSOP: articulation of Ogoni grievances*	a) Propaganda crisis b) We have the right to our society c) Ogoni is not yet history or archive d) Cross-community linkages
4.	*Freedom and development*	a) Ogoni Identity and the Struggle for Justice b) Unity for liberation c) Movement and not a moment d) Peace as tactic of struggle

Box 4: Analysis/Report on theme 1:

"There was mutual relationship between all the Ogonis": Social relationship

The research methodology was Participatory Action Research (PAR), which for McTaggart (1991), recognises and values that people and social beings within political, economic and social context. Accordingly, participants assessed their current situation by describing what the Ogoni society was before. They described their current fractured relationship as something alien to Ogoni. As one of the participants expressed:

The Ogoni people are [were] hospitable, their main occupations is [was] fishing and farming and they are [were] contented with any of their products before this crisis (PSMG).

This serves as a strong evidence to the current violent social reality in Ogoni. It shows how participants made strong decision to come out and discuss the current issues that have significant influence on their social structure. Their sentiments explained how the present social reality interferes with their 'collective consciousness' (Durkheim, 1858). These social facts are expressed thus:

> *AN: ...How did the Ogonis live?*
>
> *PLMK: The Ogonis are very peace-loving people. Before the interferences, we were okay, we were contented with ourselves. We love our farm works, we love the way things were, we were okay with it. They were not many as at then but the few that they were, we just liked it the way they were until the recent problems that arising. One thing I see also is that, back in the years, somebody from Port Harcourt, somebody from any part of the country, any part of the State, wants a housemaid, he wants an Ogoni girl or an Ogoni boy, not because they were that slavery, but because they were calm, cool headed, decent.*
>
> *AN: ...I am really interested and curious about how the Ogonis lived with each other...*
>
> *PCNNG: ...the Ogonis were very friendly to themselves. In short, if you look at Gokana in particular, you see, our pattern of settlement, very close, because we were always our brothers' neighbour. In some areas like Lewe and Bomu, you hardly know the difference because we intermarry, we inter build. There is hardly a community that you don't have a Bomu person married to or married from. This has given us a social nexus whereby we connect ourselves. Because we believe, in case of any problem, you remember yours sister who is in the next village or you remember you married from the next village. So, that has always been binding us together. We were living in peace and we have a common system whereby if you have a problem, we have a traditional setting where you can sue somebody and the case will be settled amicably.*

Despite the oppressive structure, the above interview transcripts demonstrates how participants consciously reflect on their social reality by comparing the past and present ways of life in Ogoni. Through their knowledge of the past and present events, they consistently framed a social phenomenon that is in conflict with the foundations of Ogoni socio-cultural life (Ken,). At the same time, they expressed the difficulties that are involved in challenging what has become a major obstacle to their demand for freedom of self-determination, which is necessary for their economic, social and cultural development.

Box 5: Themes and Codes

1 **Social Relationship**	2 **Divide and Rule**	3 **Marginalization: Structural Violence**	4 **The Ogoni Woman**	5 **MOSOP: Ogoni Articulation of their Grievances**	6 **Freedom and Development**
Social nexus	Propaganda	Marginalization	Intimidation	Ogoni consciousness	Development
Unity	Greed	Deprivation	Culture of silence	Formation	Participation
Organized society	Ignorance	Shame	Humiliation	Role model	Mobilization
Mutual relationship	External influence	Oppression	Lack of education	Resilience	Unity
Organized Society	Internal division	Political violence	Shame	Reorientation	NGOs
Democratic Society	Weak leadership	Disappointment	Women's rights	Responsibility	Conflict resolution
Occupation	Corrupt chiefs	Corporate crime	Pride	Structure	Justice
Population	Propaganda	Youth violence	Helplessness	Political influence	peace
Ogoni innocence	Tradition weakened	Insecurity	Participation	Vision	Local democracy
Chieftaincy	Jealousy	Cultism	Empowerment	Proactive	Social change
Cultural values	Moral decay	Culture of violence	Awareness	Grassroots mobilization	Security
Parental care	Internal oppressors	Anger	Church influence	Compromise	Development strategies
Identity	Greed	Drug usage	Courage	Hope	Empowerment
Ogoni uniqueness	Corruption	Ogoni extremists	Suffering	Aspiration	Participation
Religion	Laziness	Unemployment	Double marginalization	Reformation	Self-determination
Lack of confidence	Selfishness	Sustained violence	Vulnerability	Re-structuring	Freedom
Farming	Manipulation	Land degradation	Poverty	Right approach	Compensation
Fishing	Bribery	Land issues	Liberty	Awareness	Sustainability
Community	Factions	Peer pressure	Marriage	Factions	Credibility
Age	Borrowed culture	State violence	Job	Confidence	Transformation
Cultural values	Disunity	Political marginalization	Cultism	MOSOP vs Politics	
Transgenerational memories	Sectional politics	Miserable situation	Equal rights	KAGOTE vs MOSOP	
	Vulnerability	Aggressors		Information	
	Politics of segregation	Military occupation		Dialogue	
	Propaganda crisis VS Genuine crisis	Military repression		Ogoni imagination	
				Collective action	
				Ogoni rights	
				Collaboration	
				Ogoni consciousness	
				Change the Ogoni story	

Appendix 1:

Thematic Code matrix

AN: Now, looking at the picture, considering the picture that you have painted concerning the Ogoni society before. What do you think is the cause of the present violent activities in Ogoni land?

PVGK: Wow! Emm the present situation in Ogoni land, talking about the violence they are caused by so many factors.

AN: Okay!

Ogoni Culture vs Violence

PVGK: Yeah! There is this aspect of it that is caused by misinformation.

Turquoise8-Information
(Misinformation as cause of violence)

AN: Hmm.

See Pg 20 Same idea

PVGK: Some people are just out there to misinform the people with the view to cause some crisis for their own personal benefits. Now, this persons fall within the political class. Yeah! In Ogoni, one of the contending issues is which political party you belong to, talking about presently that is one side of it.

Turquoise8-Information
(Misinformation as cause of violence)

Misinformed by Ogoni Cause of Violence

AN: Okay!

Agbonifo Culture explored of environmental Literacy

PVGK: Now, another part of it is the living condition of the people, you cannot take that away. The people live in abject poverty and they have this sense that when they live in abundance, going by what God has deposited in their land, the oil crude and why should they in the midst of all these be poor? And so that sense of been cheated is one of the things that also give rise to the conflict.

Yellow3- Deprivation (Cause of violence)

See Pg 40 Structural Violence

AN: Hmmm.

(Context could explain about youth actions)

PVGK: This came with emm some other factors like involving of young people in cultism, now these young people they involved themselves in cultism they are such that the only authority they listen to is the head of their cult groups, the kingpins, the leaders of the cult groups. Most of them don't listen to their parents at home and of course you know the family is the building block of the society and when there is this disconnect between children from various homes, talking about youths, they don't listen to their parents anymore, they don't listen to their elders because of

Youth @ risk cults?

Structural violence See p. 100

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AN: Good morning and thank you for coming to participate in this interview. My name is Samuel. I have explained what this research is all about when we were looking at the information sheet. Looking at the social, political and economic inequalities in Ogoniland. And the studies is ehhh or what we are going to, emmm, be doing for the next forty minutes. It's a reflection of the issues that ehh would come up as regards eheh the study items that we mentioned. So, before we get started, can you introduce yourself?

PMPDG: My name is…, I am a graduate of…, a native of Bomu in Gokana Local Government Area. I am very passionate about Ogoni issues and a close student of Ken Saro-Wiwa.

AN: I am very happy to know that you are a close student of Ken Saro-Wiwa. Of course a lot of things may come ehhh within the interview about him. But just before we get into the current issues or events that are happening in Ogoniland, can I get you to really reflect on the life of the Ogoni people before this time. What was the life of the Ogoni people like before the advent of crisis?

PMPDG: Ogonis were known for their peaceful conduct. Ogonis are known for nonviolent approach to issues. Ogonis live in close-knit densely populated society. And what that suggests is that there was communal life on the increase. There was communal love that existed between members of the specific society was on the increase in Ogoni. Ogonis have different ways that are very peculiar to them when it comes to the issues of their social standing talking about their culture, the way they reason. The way they participate in civic events tells you that they are more united, they speak in one language and they don't think anybody in the world can emulate. And you see, before the ecological war that erupted in Ogoniland, this people were known for fishing and farming. And as they proceed in their economic activities, they have this mind-set of keeping their neighbours or brothers in view because you can't do anything without them. And so Ogonis were more hospitable even up till date. And that is why even they go about challenging the issues that surround their environment, they do it with decorum. They were more civilised in talking about their issues. So, Ogoni people are very unique people on planet earth. And they are this type of people that you can study them and get facts about them, about the way they do their things and the way they behave. On a general note, Ogonis are people that have this love and they're people that cherish nature. If they don't heirs nature they don't have any reason complaining or making case about the degradation of their environment. So, Ogonis are people you can rely on and they are a people who mean well for themselves and their neighbour.

AN: Yeah, so from your own explanation or understanding, or maybe your reflection about the Ogoni people, I hear you say the Ogoni society or community was very much unified set of people who came together for the betterment of the other person. That is good. Now, emm, when somebody looks at the Ogoni society, the present Ogoni society, sometimes there is this English phrase that people will really give out, that there is no smoke without fire, people really want to or they want to equate the present situation with the Ogoni people, their own lives and all that. From your own explanation, do you mean to say that the Ogoni society lived without crises, there were no crises at all?

PMPDG: There was no crisis, but on the other side, you know, human society is a complex combination of gathered thoughts and experiences, so that does not mean that the society can live without turbulent times. And it's peculiar to every society in the world. So, I can't tell you that Ogonis have lived without turbulent times. But the aspect of managing crises is one key thing that identifies the people. And another aspect of crisis management or crisis in this context, from where I am coming, that I exonerated the Ogonis, you can't say Ogonis are volatile, when it comes to handling issues. So they don't know us as people that have this crisis nature. But there may be pockets of crisis which is very normal in every human society.

AN: Oh yeah… and that is why I am asking the question. Now, there is bound to be crisis in every human society. Ehhh, you know, sometimes, when we are asked to talk about our particular cultures, we try to paint it, to give it a picture that looks like there was no crisis at all, it was all peace harmony and all that. Now, I am concerned about how the Ogoni people managed their little crisis. Of course, the crisis the Ogoni people were involved in different from the present one, what really made the Ogoni people get over their crisis. Who managed the crisis for the Ogoni people?

PMPDG: Crisis in Ogoniland is all encompassing. Everybody participates in the management of crisis. Now, the characters involved in the crisis, must, as a matter of fact, be ready to sheath their swords. And if the participants are not ready to sheath their swords, there is no way you can manage crisis. So, in Ogoni, we have ehh, leadership structure that is already on ground. And our leadership structure is such that the Ogoni people have a serious respect for hierarchy or sacrosanct of persons. Because they have respect for persons, they entrust these leaders with such power to speak on their behalf and intervene in such matters that have to do with Ogoni people. When these persons speak, when they tell you to stop whatever you are doing, because you have entrusted the power to his hand, you have no option than to obey.

AN: Yeah, you talked about hierarchy, are you talking about elders in the Ogoni society who helped manage the situation. Now, what then will be the cause of, emmm, this unimaginable violent activities in Ogoniland? We are talking about the same society which lived in peace, irrespective of the little crisis that people got themselves involved in. Now we have this particular one now, what do you think it's the reason of the present crisis in Ogoniland?

PMPDG: The reason for the present crisis cannot be taken away from aqua-culturazation, borrowed cultures coming into the lives of the native Ogonis. So, when you see things like cultism, it's not our culture. It's never in our history that we had anything called cultism. So, when people now go out and borrow these cultures into Ogoniland, the culture of the people must be corrupted and so what has given us pockets of crisis is: 1. Greed which is practicable in every society. The issue of borrowed cultures loaned cultures come into the lives of the Ogonis. Another thing that is responsible for the crisis in Ogoni is politics. You can't take it away from politics. When the people entrusted with political powers fail to meet up to their expectations, when they fail to repose the confidence that has been given unto them, now, the people have high expectations, they are high-spirited about the powers they had given but in return, they are disappointed. Some persons are not properly informed may want to react. Another issue that has brought us to where we are today cannot be taken from influence of government on Ogoni people. The government doesn't seem to give fair hearing to the Ogoni demands. They are pushed to the wall. If you have good knowledge of Ogoni history, you will notice that when we started our struggle, there was nothing like violence. That was then when Ken Tsaro-Wiwa was in-charge. Up till date, Ogoni struggle has no single trace of violence. But you can't undermine the position of young people coming up these days, especially as it happened in most of sister tribes in Kalabari and other lands. When these young people came up, they said no, Ken Saro-Wiwa fought with pen then and he was extra judicially killed. Since then, the government has actually pushed the Niger Delta people to the wall.

AN: Now, now, am just emmm, curious about youth involvement in this violent activities. Why is it particularly youths who are so much into these violent activities?

PMPDG: Now, now, if you want to look at it from this perspective, you will see that the youths are the life-wire of any society. Youths constitute the work force, and so whatever value reorientation that should be done in a society, should be directed to the youths. The youths are people of certain age brackets, who are curious about making ends meet. And so if you don't channel their resources, if you don't direct them well, they would want to choose the wrong option to making life better for themselves. So, when a youth is unemployed, when the heart of the youth is not seriously engaged, and his hands are not seriously engaged, and somebody tempts them with, maybe with petty things that will make them do otherwise, they will do it. So, I think eheh, the youths are more involved because the youths are idle, it's not as if they are lazy.

AN: Now, we see increase in population in Ogoniland maybe one of the causes of this. That the number of the Ogoni people is growing high and people actually have nothing to hold unto.

PMPDG: It's not a population issue. Every living society is bound to grow.

AN: When I say population, I am looking at eheh, you know, when you read the history of the Ogoni people, the Ogoni people, even from the beginning, the number outweighed the land that they live on, so population from that point of view is what I am referring to. That you have a number of Ogoni people growing up yet there is no land for people to live on, would that be an issue? Because the densely populated thing you mentioned could be a factor. Yeah, because crisis can break out amongst people when there is no land, especially when you are farmers and among yourselves you have no land to farm. I just want to know about that.

PMPDG: In this context, the issue of population could be properly managed if there is good planning policy by the government. If the government is responsive to the needs of the people, they will have a periodic survey on the population of the people. And if that is done, the planning and proper allocation will be made in that light and when they see a government that is not doing so very much about, you see that population issues might come up. But in the Ogoni context, I think the Ogonis have what their population can live on if the right thing is done.

AN: Okay, now, you talked about politics, you talked about government, government participation in the violent activities in Ogoniland, anybody will be looking at it from the point of view of oil exploration, and not really meeting up to the demands in terms of ehh settlement of the locals. Now, the politics you mentioned, are we talking about Ogoni indigenes in politics who are really causing these troubles for the Ogoni people?

PMPDG: It is multi-dimensional. You cannot take away from the Ogoni politicians, and as well you cannot take it away from political influence from outside Ogoni. Because just like, sorry to say this, but just like our system is, what is done here is not determined by the indigenes, so even if somebody will become a councillor, it's not determined by the indigenes, it's not determined by the people that queued behind him.

AN: So it's about internal and external factors. Now, when you look at Ogoniland, you were a student of Ken Saro-Wiwa, and everybody who knows about his story and what he did as far as MOSOP is concerned, he moved the Ogoni people. He went village to village, spoke to the people, the people understood his language, and the movement, just from nowhere, came up and it was really a force that was going to bring justice for the Ogoni people if not for the tragic end. Emm, anybody can really say positive things about MOSOP during Ken Saro-Wiwa's days. What do you think about MOSOP at present relation to what we are talking about? MOSOP is a social movement

of the Ogonis, and it's the voice of the Ogonis as far as bringing justice to the Ogoni people. Where is MOSOP standing now?

PMPDG: As one of the strategies employed by the then government of Nigeria, they used what we call the snake theory. You cut the head, and the tail has no power. That was the policy they employed…

AN: Cuts in… can you say that loudly so that my tape can pick it?

PMPDG: I said the strategy employed by the then government of Nigeria was the Snake Theory: you cut the head, and the tail has no power. So that was what they did in the case of Saro Wiwa. But Saro-Wiwa as a visionary leader said something which is still conspicuous on the marbles of history till today. He said you can kill the messenger but not the message. Though they killed Saro-Wiwa, the agitation has gone beyond the scope of Ogoni. It has become a Niger Delta thing, it has become a global issue. Saro-Wiwa, when he was alive, MOSOP was alive in him. But the truth of the matter is that currently you hardly find a charismatic, a dodged, pragmatic leader that would stand in the shoes of Saro-Wiwa. Even when we do, the qualities of Saro-Wiwa, is it alive in you? Even if you are leading the struggle in the name of MOSOP, do you have the Spirit, the carriage of Ken Saro-Wiwa? So, MOSOP is not dead, but MOSOP needs somebody that can revive it.

AN: MOSOP is not dead but it needs somebody to revive it. Now, you are looking at MOSOP as a social movement that is weak.

PMPDG: Not necessarily weak.

AN: Not weak? I see a contradiction there. MOSOP is not weak but it needs someone to revive it?

PMPDG: Yes!

AN: Let me understand that.

PMPDG: Now, now, now, the point I am trying to make is that Saro-Wiwa, when Saro-Wiwa was alive, when he speaks MOSOP speaks. Now, today we have leaders who speak that minds and not MOSOP speaking.

AN: That's why I came in with the word 'weak'.

PMPDG: That doesn't necessarily mean that the umbrella body, the apex body is weak.

AN: Let me understand what MOSOP's agenda is now. I should be clear about that because when Ken came up, Ken had his own means of agitation. He spoke and everybody understood like you said, that the Ogoni people are speaking not Ken speaking. He spoke the voice of the Ogoni people. Now, if MOSOP is still alive, I want to know the mode of agitation. I want to understand that if you say it's not weak but it needs somebody to revive it.

PMPDG: If you are conversant with Ogoni history, when MOSOP started, far back in 1990, you know that there were two categories of MOSOP activists. And we have the one that was led by Ken Saro-Wiwa, and other group was engaging the government in dialogue.

AN: Against Ogonis?

PMPDG: Not against Ogonis. Now, Saro-Wiwa also had a group that was when the external voices now invaded Ogoniland and they are trying to set us apart. So, we now have leaders who say, Oboy look ooo, emmm, I was one time this in the state, the other person who was one time this now says look ooo, this is the best way we think we can approach the government about issues that have to do with us. Now, let's go to them, negotiate with them, dialogue with them, and see, when a movement is on, some persons may see that guy who says we want to dialogue with government as a weakling. Or perhaps somebody who the government has used to destabilise the struggle. So, but in the person of Saro-Wiwa, you find a man who is always, confronting government with Ogoni demands.

AN: Yeah, that's why I want to know. You keep talking about Ken's approach which we all understand, and it's gone completely. We will never get that. I just want to understand what the approach of the present MOSOP is because we need to be clear about this. I stands as the voice of the Ogoni people. Now, they have an example, which is how Ken Saro-Wiwa did his, how he moved MOSOP as a leader, what is the approach now? Is there any specific way they are approaching this justice thing that we can be hopeful?

PMPDG: I think the... approach pattern now is more of negotiating with the government…

AN: Cuts in… negotiating with the government now are they compromising? Is there anything that shows that in the process of negotiation they are compromising the Ogoni bill of Rights which is the book that speaks about the Ogoni demand?

PMPDG: Categorically I can't say they have been found wanting because I don't have any proof to that (interrupt: okay)

AN: So, they are actually doing what the Ogoni people expect them to do?

PMPDG: Slowly.

AN: Slowly?

PMPDG: Yeah!

AN: Okay, let me also understand something about MOSOP Leadership. Emm leaders of MOSOP involved in the politics since they are negotiating with the Government, are they into politics? Are they serving as lobbyist now or what is the faith of MOSOP?

PMPDG: Actually leaders of MOSOP these days you can't take it from them that they are not involved in politics.

AN: Okay, so they are members of political parties?

PMPDG: They could be members in disguise (interrupt: okay) because I want to reflect on the time of the immediate past president of MOSOP Barrister Ledunmite. Now Barrister Ledunmite ordinarily we expect him to be non-partisan but at a point in time we started seeing him having federal government appointments (interrupt: okay) and by Nigerian context they don't give appointments to a non-partisan person. Though I don't have any evidence to prove that he is a member of this political party or not.

AN: Yeah but you have to pay allegiance to a government, you said it yourself. A government in a political dispensation will not give any body any position you know unless you pay allegiance to

that government. So, automatically we say that he belonged or that he supported the political party that gave him that responsibility.

AN: Now emm when you look at emm the situation of MOSOSP now, emm what do you think is sustaining MOSOP with all that we have looked at, what is sustaining MOSOP? Indeed the days of Ken Saro-Wiwa he would come out and tell the Ogoni people, one one Naira and people knew that Ken Saro-Wiwa used his own resources to sustain MOSOP. Now, with all these that we have looked at about the present MOSOP, what do you think is sustaining MOSOP?

PMPDG: Now, that... is where the issues lies because MOSOP ordinarily is supposed to be a non-profit making organisation (interrupt: Hmm) But nothing can drive any organisation... no organisation can make efforts can make any good move you know without finance (interrupt: hmm) So the question, the big question you have asked me now which Ogonis need to know is where is MOSOP getting the resources from?

AN: Yeah yeah because they are running the organisation and they need money./ you can go to their office they have an office in Port Harcourt and there is another office in Bori which is a very big one. Now, what is sustaining that of course you are throwing back the question which is what we have to really need to keep reflecting on. We are not looking for immediate answers but the answers will come when we keep reflecting and all that. Now it's really difficult to understand the position of MOSOP from our reflection you can understand with me it is difficult to understand really the position of MOSOP. Now if that is real, because a social movement has its own characteristics and social movement is not an NGO, it's not a political party, it mostly begin from the grassroots. Now do you think that with these unclear position of MOSOP that the people at the grassroots still understand what the people the leaders of MOSOP are doing? What is the relationship between MOSOP up there and the grassroots?

PMPDG: There is a lacuna. (interrupt: There is a lacuna, okay) but during the time of Ken Saro-Wiwa you see Ken Saro-Wiwa organising town hall meetings and these days you hardly see anything town hall meeting. In fact, in fact, I can tell you with good authority that what is sustaining MOSOP is... (Interrupt: Okay). Now, if you look at Ken Saro-Wiwa, after Ken Saro-Wiwa was judiciously killed, sorry was extra judiciously killed, Ledunmite became the next president of MOSOP. There is an event to commemorate the Ogoni struggle, the pains of Ogoni people and that is what we call Ogoni day. January 4th of every year is set aside for world unrepresented peoples in the world. Unrepresented minority in the world. and so Ogonis keyed into by adopting that day as the day that the moved and protested against the unhuman activities of shell on Ogoni land so a lot of Ogonis were brutalised, they were killed, they were injured and that was 4th January, 1993. And so when this event happened, Ken Saro-Wiwa and Ogoni leaders in their wisdom decided to use that day to commemorate the Ogoni struggle. And after the death of Ken you have the likes of the former president of the federal republic of Nigeria Olusegun Obasanjo who will be visiting Bori annually to commemorate with the Ogonis. Now after the time of Obasanjo, after the time of Ledunmite what happened? You only see the governor of the state coming to Ogoni day (interrupt: hmm) so that tells you that the love, the strength, the machinery of MOSOP is gradually going down.

AN: Now let me ask you another interesting question. Do you think the position of MOSOP now what it stands for money changes hands, do you agree with that? Do you think money changes hands?

PMPDG: I think at this point we need to... we need to do a kind of ehh (interrupt: a survey?) no no not necessarily a survey, yes a survey but this time on MOSOP president a kind of assets

declaration before they become MOSOP president so we can use the yard stick to actually know what has happened.

AN: Even without that as Ogoni people you know, you understand these people. Now, there's of course what we have established here with you is that there is a very big gap between the grassroots MOSOP which is the ehh in Ogoni land and MOSOP leadership. That's established. Now from all that we have said what do you think will be the solution? Now let me just reflect on this, when we started we looked the Ogoni society having elders who really managed the society even in the times of crisis and when you look at the composition pf MOSOP, KOTRA is the elders wing, (interrupt: traditional rulers) Traditional rulers who are also members who should also be doing the job elders were doing before. Now do you think that these elders of MOSOP are weak as well have nothing to contribute as regards this mention, crisis that is going on in Ogoni land within MOSOP?

PMPDG: Definitely the KOTRA and the traditional council (interrupt: leadership) is weak. the reason is simple, government intends to weaken the architecture of the traditional setting at the expense of their influence because of the traditional setting is strong some obnoxious policies coming from the government and one other reason that might be responsible for the slow pace of the agitation or the struggle by MOSOP currently could be finance. That could be one of the reason why there is lacuna between the leadership of MOSOP and the local people because like you mentioned clearly, Ken Saro-Wiwa was using his money. The one one Naira contribution was a counterpart funding for all Ogonis to register your involvement in the struggle not necessarily raising money from people.

AN: Yeah. So you think government of Nigeria influences who becomes leader, elder in Ogoni land?

PMPDG: No they don't. (interrupt: They don't?) They don't... they don't to an extent. Because in Ogoni we have hierarchy of traditional leadership now we have the king, we have six kingdoms in Ogoni now each of these king have a king... each of this kingdom have a king and that king is getting on the platform of hereditary...

AN: Cuts in… so what I mean it's I know I think to some extent we understand that. My question is are they also silenced by the government through money?

PMPDG: No I want to make a point, I did mention three categories of traditional rulers (interrupt: Okay okay) Now one is the king, one is the paramount ruler which is also gotten on the platform of the on the grounds of hereditary but there is this other one that stand in between the king and the paramount ruler (interrupt: Okay) We call them the (interrupt: mine yes yes) Meneboas. Now the Meneboas have a district they control like five communities come together and form a boa and so these man is influenced by government. Government decides who becomes who becomes the Meneboa.

AN: Okay, so that they penetrate the people?

PMPDG: Yes!

AN: Now let's... I think our time is it's... what do you think will be the solutions if you look at what you... a flashback from what you read from the research sheet, solutions are really necessary as far as this research is concerned. What do you think will be the strategies that we can adopt now to really look after this crisis or control this crisis or get rid of this crisis?

PMPDG: You see, you see crisis, the remote cause of any crisis must be addressed for the crisis to have you know put… you see that in Bomu where I come from, if you are conversant with Ogoni history about oil you will discover that oil was first discovered in… now oil was later discovered in Bomu in 1958 two years after in commercial quantities and now this is that Bomu were the oil was discovered. Now do you have thing to show for it? (interrupt: Hmmm) Do you have anything to convince you that this is one land that has contributed immensely to the economic mainstream of Nigeria? No. (interrupt: okay) Now, on the part of Ogonis, are we sincere to ourselves? Now if you get hold of books like encyclopaedia that was, you know, published in the seventies, world atlas, Ababio chemistry and other books that where published in the 70's, 80's you will discover that the history or there was a publication made by the federal ministry of information about oil production in Nigeria 1976 now all these documents I am quoting points to the fact that oil was discovered in Bomu in 1958 but later in 1990 when Ogoni bill of rights was adopted by Ogoni people because there was no Bomu man at the helms of affairs of MOSOP now the name Bomu was expunged for K-Dere, now that has already generated anger in a Bomu man…

AN: Cuts in… so you are referring to the crisis within and amongst the Ogoni people?

PMPDG: …yes I am looking at how they can address those crisis. So we need to go back and address those issues that we know that have generated anger in Ogonis.

AN: So you are calling for a revise or revision of the Ogoni bill of rights?

PMPDG: Yes! If it should be taken as a serious document (interrupt: so you are telling me now that... because this is the first time I am hearing this, you are telling me now that there was a bit of foul play (interrupt: Yes!) in putting up the bill of Ogoni rights (interrupt: Yes) So it needs to be revived?)

PMPDG: Yes!

AN: Okay, I think that will be the very first solution for you (interrupt: For me?) Yeah and that's within now yes, and it's not really pointing to emm the present crisis so we go back to the present crisis.

PMPDG: No the present crisis in Ogoni land now we are looking at the Ogoni land that the average youth can have means of livelihood. And so if the average youth can have means of livelihood if they are positively engaged. Now there won't be room for them to carry arms for crisis. So the restoration of our environment everybody must not do a white collar job, some persons must be engaged in things that they have within them, their talents.

AN: hmmm the traditional culture farming and fishing?

PMPDG: Yes! They are talents they are inherent talents. Now, the necessary of the enabling environment for these talents to be harnessed is important. Now do the average Ogoni youth or the average Ogoni child have access to education? Now, the average Ogonis live on less that N1,000 per days if a child... if an adult live on less than N1,000 per day now how will he be able to manage his own family? So, if the family is not well managed which value will they embrace?

AN: Who are you looking at when you are referring to all these? who is responsible for bringing all these to the youths? Are you looking at the government?

PMPDG: We are looking at the government. (interrupt: the government, Okay) Because the government with the IOC have killed our means of livelihood.

AN: So the government should do something in restoring all that you mentioned to the Ogoni people?

PMPDG: Yes!

AN: You think that will work? these youths who are carrying arms they abuse drugs as well. You think just coming with those things, facilities you mentioned will work?

PMPDG: Yes, to a large extent.

AN: and we... somebody I remember very well somewhere, this is an example I am giving you, I had worked with a group of people who were actually disoriented and were given this ehhh instruments to learn handwork and all that and before we knew it they sold those items because they think it was waste of time. Do you think that will be the case in Ogoni land if things just come without proper reorientation of these youths?

PMPDG: Then the issue of reorientation is very key in this case...

AN: Is very key, Okay.

AN: Now you agree with me that that should precede any activity (interrupt: Yes) that will bring the youth back to sanity? Now from all we have said, as a young man, I see you as a young man too in Ogoni land. I remember off tape, you mentioned to me that you are in Port Harcourt for economic reasons, what... how do you feel, this is the last question I am asking you. How do you feel about all that is happening to you own Ogoni people and yourself, inclusive?

PMPDG: well it's unfortunate that it is happening to me as an Ogoni man.

AN: Do you feel bad about it?

PMPDG: Very, very sad.

AN: What is your first reaction when you feel that way? What's your first reaction, you feel like taking arms to emm killing anybody who is doing this?

PMPDG: No no no. emm you see, in life there are options (Interrupt: I am just joking about that) I know I know. In life there are options, just like I want to go off the scene now. Like in Bomu, Bomu is in Gokana and after Bodo, the next populated community is Bomu. Now, any... like what I also said that oil was discovered after… in Bomu which means we have contribute our quota, not just Nigeria Rivers State and Gokana but it may interest you, you will be shocked to hear that Bomu has not produced local government chairman for more than 20years now that the local government was created.

AN: Yeah but that's another thing that could make the Bomu people angry with the situation. Now, you feel sad about the whole situation but you don't feel taking a gun and going out there are options in life and positive options.

PMPDG: Yeah!

AN: Thank you. I appreciate your contribution and I think what we are doing is trying to get solutions for the problems that we are facing in Ogoni land. I just wish that all we have discussed you will take them on board as I will take them on board and we will see how we can contribute our

own quota to building up the Ogoni society again for the good of the Ogoni people. Thanks very much.

PMPDG: Thanks.

AN: Thank you

PMPDG: you are welcome.

AN: Okay chif gud aftanun.

PFTDGG: Gud aftanun.

AN: As I tel you bifo wen I dey explain to yu bifo we stat naw, my name na Samuel. I don tel u say na bikos of de stodi wey choch ask me mak I do bikos of de fada wok wey I dey do na im make I say mak I com Ogoniland bikos de stodi na abaut Ogoni pipu. Na abaut de sosha life of Ogoni, abaut dia ekonomik lif and abaut de politikal lif of de Ogoni. So e go beta mak pesin wey dey do dat kain ting kom Ogoniland kom lisin to Ogoni pipu, make him know rili wetin dey hapun for de place bifo de pesin go dey rite aniting wey im don si for im eye. Naw, bifo we go kontinu, I jus wan mak u introdus yosef fes.

PFTDGG: Okay. Tank yu fada. My name na His Royal Highness… JP. De paramon rula of… cominiti.

AN: Tank yu. Wetin I wan mak we tok naw, jus tings wey u don no dem bikos na yu bi chif for dis place, e get sumtings wey u no wey anoda pesin no sabi wey u go tok bikos of all dis tings wey I don tel u oredy. Naw, de fes ting wey I wan mak we luk into na him bi de lif of d Ogoni, de way wey Ogoni people bin dey liv dia lif bifo dis time. Yu kno say if u luk Ogoniland naw, trobu ful evriwer, naw if pesin sitdon wey im no kno wetin dey hapun bifo, e no go kno wetin dey hapun naw. So, wetin bin dey hapen for Ogoniland bifo wey now we kom dey si all dis trobu wey we get?

PFTDGG: Eeen, Fada…

AN: Hmm.

PFTDGG: De ting wey dey hapun n de ting wey bin dey hapen bifo make we fes tok abaut bifo.

AN: Bifo, yes

PFTDGG: For de bifo, Ogoni bin dey veri pisfu, dem bin kwayet, lovely, evribodi dey cari him broda along for evritin wey dey hapen. And for dis, Ogoni bin dey progres,

an wen somtin like dis kom dey, e kom get sum pipu wey dem no want anoda to progress.

AN: Hmm.

PFTDGG: Somtin… e get wetin we dey tok for our Ogoni hia. We dey say som famili, two kok no go gro for one famili. U go say mak dem say onli u, onli u. An for dat, if u si ur broda wey wan progress, u go pres am dawn so dat dem go say na u dey helep evribodi.

AN: Hmm.

PFTDGG: Na de problem wey Ogoni pipu bin dey get, so for dat u try to dey comot fud from ur broda, ur frend, ur pipu mout make e dey lik say na onli yu bi oga, onli u bi lod.

AN: Hmm.

PFTDGG: For Ogoni pipu.

AN: So dis wan bin dey hapun bifo?

PFTDGG: E bin dey hapun.

AN: Wetin we dey tok naw na dey lif wey don hapun bifo dem born u. or na Pipu don tel u wetin bin dey hapun for Ogoni as u bi chif naw, na u suppose tel pipu wetin bin dey hapun, na so e supos hapun.

PFTDGG: Na so e bin dey hapun Fada (interrupt… Mmm) I am 44years old. I no bi smal pikin, dis yer don mak 12yers wey I de on dis throne as de paramount ruler so I am not a smal pikin.

AN: Hmm.

PFTDGG: So, I can tel u wetin I don si n wetin I bin don hier from my grandfather to my father. So, na im mak I dey tok all dis tins

AN: Hmmmm

PFTDGG: Ivin in dis mai cominiti, dat ting bin dey hapun an e still dey hapun, bot de tin be say for now, we dey try coret som of dis tins so dat e no go hapun lik dat

AN: We dey kom, we go tok abaut al dat wan naw. Me a jus wan mak we no, mak we ondastan wetin bin dey bifo. Naw, u don tel mi say wetin bin dey bifo for Ogoniland, dey lik say na im dey kontinu as we dey sii naw.

PFTDGG: Yes!

AN: Naw, dat Ogoniland bin dey pisfu, Ogoni bin dey liv wel wit im broda or sista. Naw, u wan tel me say pesin no dey…

PFTDGG: Enta mout… dat tim, pesin dey fayt anoda pesin bot respet bin dey. Respet bin dey dat tim ooo. If u bi mai sinio u tel me say, if I dey fayt or korel wit pesin, u tel me say stop, I go stop, bot naw dat wan no dey again.

AN: Hmm. So, if dat wan no dey again, if dat wan bin dey hapun bifo, na wich pipu, u kno say, dis awa Afrikan kocho wey we get, de tin dey lik ic oda. If u go mai own Tiv, if u go Igbo, if u go Yoruba, if you go even Hausa sef, e get somtins wey we dey do wey bi de same. If e get anitime for Ogoniland wey tins bin dey like dat? Na hu bi dey pipu wey dey kontro dis tin? Bikos u kno say for Afrika we dey tok abaut eldas ivin for famili we dey tok abaut perents, na hu bi de pipu wey bin dey sov dis problem dat tim wen dis tins bin dey hapun?

PFTDGG: Ok. Tank yu fada. Dat tim pipu bin dey respet eldas. In de cominiti, na de kansul of chifs, dose wey de lidaship dey rule comuniti, dem bin dey insid otority, wen dem tok, evribodi go

dey onda dat law. Wen u kom to ur own famili, ur parents, mama an papa, wen dem tell dere chudren say stop! Dem dey obey n stop. Ivin inta-cominiti, dat is, dis comuniti an dis cominiti, if de lida, pipu wey dey rule de two cominiti, if anitin hapun dem say we no wan dis, mak dis tin hapun, de two cominiti dey obey. E get wetin we dey use, we dey call am rafia palm, if two cominiti wan fayt an anoda cominiti kom pin dat rafia palm bitwin de two cominiti, dem go stop behin dat tin. Nobodi go do ani palava again.

AN: Na pis.

PFTDGG: Na pis bi dat. Bot naw, na him mak I say, na im mak dat time pis bin dey veri wel.

AN: Naw, I jus wan, bikos u don tok abaut rafia naw. Na Ogoni sain abi na anoda kocho na im bin dey cary dat rafia.

PFTDGG: Na sain wey Ogoni pipu get for pis.

AN: Wance yu si rafia na peace?

PFTDGG: Na pis.

AN: Naw, from wetin u don tel me naw, if u luk am wel wetin dey hapun for Ogoniland naw, u wan konet wetin dey hapun with wetin bin dey hapun bifo, so, difrens no dey. Na de mind wey pipu bin get bifo na im dem don cary am enta dis tim wey we dey so?

PFTDGG: Noo, Fada.

AN: Dis wan difren?

PFTDGG: plenty difren dey. 1. Dat tim, e get wetin dey naw wey no bin dey dat time, koltisim no bin dey and koltisim kom mak pipu no get respet for eldas again. Dat tim kidnapin no bin dey, bot if yu tok som smal pikin no like, two, tree, dem go fit kom naw, carri u comot for ur haus, do anitin wey dem like. Dem fit carri u go bush, u stay four days, five days, one week, dem go say if u no bring so so moni dem no go rilis u. Dat tim, for de pas dat one no bin dey. So naw, dis pikin, som drog wey bin dey dat tim pipu no dey know, bot naw, dem don advatis dat drog pipu kom dey kno say if u tak am, e go jack veri well. Wit dat drog e kom mak chudren, pikin, no get respet for eldas again. So, dat tim respet bin de bot naw respet no dey again. As e kom hapun lik dat ting kom change. Dat kontro wey eldas bin dey get, eldas no kom get dat kontro again na chudren kom dey kontro eldas naw. Na im mak de wod bifo, yestaday and today no kom bi de sam again.

AN: Naw, if u lisin to wetin u tok, na im bi say problem dey. Anibodi wey hia wetin u tok naw e go say na big big problem dey. Big big problem na im don enta Ogoniland dis. Naw, dis chudren wey dey drink tins, na Ogoni chudren abi?

PFTDGG: Na Ogoni chudren.

AN: Hu don mak dis chudren don get dis kain pawa wey dem get naw wey maybe dat time wey dem born u sef dat pawa no dey chudren hand. Hu don bring dis kain chudren wey kom get dis kain pawa even eldas no fit tel dem anitin na dem dey kontro Ogoni society?

PFTDGG: For naw, I canot tel u say na so so so pesin. Dey jus fom a grup, dey cal it deebam n deewell. Dem get dere oga oga wey dey.

AN: Di oga na Ogoni ogas?

PFTDGG: Al ova nigiria e dey, na cult wey dey. If u join ani of de grup, dem go put u so dat u folo ani of de tins wey dem wan do. Na him make respet no kom dey. As I dey naw dey tok if I do wetin dem no lik, if I do wetin deebam no lik or wetin deewell no like, dem fit jus kom carri me comot or dem beat me. De law no kom dey again.

AN: Dem cari am for hand?

PFTDGG: Dem cari am for hand bikos wen dem do lik dat na im dem dey chop. Bikos pipu wey de up, top top pipu, na im dey sponso dem, na im mak trobu kom dey dis we state an dis we local govment naw. Bifo e bin no dey bikos dat tim big big pipu wey dey up no bin dey giv dem moni. For istance naw, If I no fit get moni to go bai gun wey dem dey cal AK47. E get pesin wey dey up wey go giv dem moni go bai for dem. Bulet wey dem go put am, im go giv dem moni to go bai. Wen dem know say all dis tin dey dia na dem si say u no get am, dem go use dat wan to fayt u, tretin yu. So na im make dat tim wey nobodi bin dey do dat kain tin, pis bin dey veri wel bot naw wey dem get oga wey dey provid al dis tins for dem, kom mak dia hed kom big, dem no get respet again.

AN: Naw, u bin tel me bifo say na 12yers na im u don bi paramon chif for dis… cominiti.

PFTDGG: Yes!

AN: Naw, as u dey wit dis chudren naw, u wey bi chif don sabi al dis tins kom tel me, even u dem no dey respet u, u dey fia dem as chif? U no get anitin wey u go tel dem wey go mak dem kam dawn, u dey fia dem too?

PFTDGG: Wel, as I dey wey I dey tok to yu naw, i no dey fia dem. De tin wey mak som pipu dey fia dem bi say if dem cari dem go wok, if u use dem as ur bodi gad wey dey wit u…

AN: Enta mout… If u get somtin to do wit dem?

PFTDGG: Yes, wen u do lik dat, aniday wey dem ask u moni u giv dem, ask u moni u give dem, n u no kom give dem again, dem go get problem wit u. Me, I no dey use to do anitin. I no dey send dem message, dat is wai I hav atority to tok with dem anihow I wan to do.

AN: Yeah.

PFTDGG: I dey tok wit dem, tel dem u mus do dis.

AN: Dem dey hia u?

PFTDGG: Dem dey hia me bikos i don bilong to ani of de grups an if dem no obey or folo wetin I tok, I can do anitin. Like in 2010 en, by 2009 I bai de fest moto wey I bai, den 2010 we kom get problem. Wen we get problem for de cominiti, dem wan scata de cominiti, I say, dat is I comot for de cominiti go anoda cominiti go stay to balans up mysef and kom back and mak pis. Wen I make de pis bikos dat tim wey de problem bin dey if to say I dey insid e get somtins wey for hapun. Wan

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of my oga wey dey advis me tel me say de bes way to defen na to atak, so I must go home n atak de problem wey dey mai cominiti. Na dat giv me kampe gidigba, I kom stand. I kom sov evritin kom back home. No mata what, dat tim I pass tru many problem. Dem bon dat car for mai frontage

AN: Dat yur car wey you bin bai. Dem bon am?

PFTDGG: Yes! De fest tin wey I do, I lis of dem, arrest dem, cari dem go State CID. From dia to prisin. Al of dem sav for four four yers. To show say wetin dem do…

AN: Enter mout… for de bad tin wey dem do.

PFTDGG: …e no good. Dat riacshon den prov bifo dem say if dem do anoda tin again (enter mout… you go do de sam tin) I go do mor dan dat. By 2015, dat tim I don bai dis one [pointing at the car], dem say Shel bring five five bilion to each cominiti. Mai cominiti pipu say dem wan do problem, I say Shel no give dat moni o. I tok am.

AN: Hu kom tel dem dat wan? Hu bring dat news?

PFTDGG: Dat news na devil jus pas dat tok for air. E afet Bodo, at least I can say dat more dan twenti lif loss for Bodo. For Lewe, mor dan twenti lif loss. For Bomu, mor twenti lif lost. For Biara, lif lost. For Kpor, lif loss. Only Gbe an Mogho wey no life loss for dat gosip wey dem say Shel pay five five bilion to ich of de cominiti an de paramon rula an de concil of chifs embezu de moni. I cal my cominiti pipu at de town squer, tel dem say dat tin na lie oo. Dem hol mi, cari mi go for bush, I stay three awas with dem, I tel dem, de tin wey dem dey tok na lie. Bot if notin hapun to me an I rich hom I go do wetin dem go kno say dem trit me badli. Dem say chif abeg, we know say u tok tru, go haus. For al dis vilages wey dey for Gokana, na onli Gbe wey nobodi get mak, injury, or damage for im haus or propaty for dat lie

AN: Lie-lie news.

PFTDGG: I cal de onli Rev Fr wey from dis cominiti an set a comitii to go Shel fin out weda de tin wey dem tok dey true. Wen dem go fin out kom bak, dem say dat tin na lie. Dem kom kno say wetin I dey tok na tru. De cominiti kom dey pisful. So, som cominiti dey invov wey dem pay som moni bot dem no kom tok. Al dis tins kom bring problem problem for Ogoni hia. Bot som tims e gud make de lida, pipu wey dey lid too, bi sinsia, trutful, straitfowad.

AN: Mak dem tok tru.

PFTDGG: So dat dem go no say pipu wey dey unda u, u cari dem along

AN: Mak dem dey no wetin dey hapun.

PFTDGG: Sori, u fit tink say I digres.

AN: No, no, no!

PFTDGG: I no wai I use dis two obstacles wey hapun to me as an exampu to prov som certin tins abaut de lidaship.

AN: Dat wan no bi problem, I lik am de way u tok am.

PFTDGG: Na lik dat, afta wen dose pipu kom from prisin, wen I tok say if don do dis, u mus do dis. At lis in mai haus I hav de fil contanin de resinashon of koltism, abaut 30 pipu, mor dan dat dey resain from koltism. I tol dem dat u wil rite giv me, u send to al de chuchis wey dey for dis cominiti, u giv DPO, SSS, JTF comanda, lokal govment ciaman, de ... in chage of de hole Gokana Kindom, dat you're no longer a cultist, an bikos of de akshon wey I don tak, man pipu now resain. Bot dat tim, if to say I bin dey use dem dey wok, I for no fit do dat kain tin.

AN: De tin for spoil evritin. Naw, evribodi wey hia u go no say na so chif sopose do wit de pipu wey im dey wok wit. U tink say dis one na jus shot kweson na im I wan ask yu. Yu tink say as yu dey do dis wan dey go lik dis wey evritin dey fin for yur cominiti, e get som chif wey dey Ogoni wey no dey do de same?

PFTDGG: Yes! veri wel.

AN: Okay.

PFTDGG: Mani of dem, eh…,

AN: Enta mout… Dem dey kolet moni?

PFTDGG: No bi say kolet moni, dem dey use dose bois as bodi gads.

AN: Wetin dem dey fia?

PFTDGG: No bi say fia, as I dey naw wen I see say deebam dey strong for dis cominiti, I go use al of dem as my bois so dat nobodi fit toch me! Na so sum chifs dey do. I have to be very…

AN: Bot wetin dem dey do we pesin go toch dem? U bi chif for Afrikan cominiti wey u bi chif pipu go dey fia u weda u get bodigad or not bikos I no, I undastand wetin u dey tok. I jus wan no wetin dem dey wan dis cot guys mak dem bi dia bodi gads.

PFTDGG: De tin wey mak dem dey do dat kain tin bi say, wen u dey chit ur cominiti, u go use dem, na so som of dem dey do. U go use dem so dat ani bad tin wey yu comit for de cominiti nobodi fit tok for yur present, evribodi go say yu dey rit. Ivin if u gada pipu for town squer, u kom say, we go dimolish so so haus. Dat tin wey yu tok na true, dat tin wey u tok we go do am. Den som tim sum of dem no bi de ril chif wey sopos to rule dat cominiti, dem manova.

AN: Dem do magu-magu.

PFTDGG: Dat magu-magu wey dem do kom mak naw dem don do magu-magu enta if dem no get wetin go mak pipu fia dem, dem fit remove dem, so dem go mak pipu dey fayt so dat nobodi go get tim to say yu, yu no sopos dey dis posishon, yu, yu no sopos dey hia. Dis pipu go folow dem do dis tin. Na im mak som of dem kom dey use gons.

AN: De bois?

PFTDGG: Yes!

AN: Naw, I wan ask u, I don get wetin u dey tel mi abaut dat wan. Dis bois wey dey do dis bad bad tins for dis una cominiti, wetin u tink say dey kos dis tin. Wetin don hapun to dem wey don mak

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dem dey do dis kain tin for dis cominitis, bikos if u si Ogoni cominitis naw, aniwia wey u go krisis dey. Pipu go tel u say na dis bois wey dey do am. E get anitin wey dey hapun for una cominitis wey dey mak dem dey join dis bad bad group or na jus bikos dem wan join na him dem dey join? Wetin bi de gain wey dem dey gain insid wey dey mak evribodi dey join?

PFTDGG: From de litu way wey I sabi, de numba one tin wey dey mak dem dey join, so dat if anoda pesin wit dem get problem dem go cal dia group kom go fayt; na de numba wan ting. Den, e get wetin, weda e dey for bible oo, bot dem dey tok am say pesin wey sidon wey no dey do anitin, na devu go dey use am work.

AN: Hmm.

PFTDGG: "An idle mind is the devil's workshop". So for dat, wen dem no dey do anitin dem kom dey sidon, sidon, no dey do anitin, onli wetin dem go kom dey rison for dia head na to do bad bad tin: to tif, to go do rapin, bikos dem no dey dress wel, dem no kom get anitin, wen dem tif na im dem go fit chop. Wen dem go tif na im dem go fit bai nika wear. De way wey dem dey, dem no go fit si beta gel cal. Onli wetin dem fit tink for dia head na to go rape pesin. So, al dis tins na tin, wey wen yu si say yu no fit do dis tin, an yu kom tink say from dis group yu fit do dis tin, kom make som of dem join. Either from dat im fit get anoda pesin propaty, or from dia woman wey yu for no fit cal, u get. De tim wey u for no get moni, u get. If pesin tok to yu, yu go cari yur pipu go difend yur pesin, na de tin wey mak som of dem join. More especially, som of dem, dem no go skul, to write dia name dem no sabi, but skul wey dem no go and dem no gree go.

AN: Wetin I jus wan kno abaut dis tin bi say e get som tins wey go dey hapun for pesin place, for pesin communiti wey go dey make him chudren no go dey do beta tin. So, for Ogoniland, dem no go skul. Yu say dem dey sidon dem no dey do anitin, wetin kom kos dem, bikos Ogoni dey go fam, I don si fam, I don si fish, dem say pipu dey go kach fish for water so wetin hapen wey dis chudren come sitdon for haus kom dey give dem dis kain spirit wey don enta dem wey dem dey do dis kain tin?

PFTDGG: Skul dey, fam dey, riva dey wey dem go fit go kach fish, bot anitim wey u don cari yur hand put insid bad thin…

AN: Enta mout… e go dey sweet yu.

PFTDGG:… yu go dey blind yu no go si road. So, anitim wey dem invov demsef insid dis kain, dis dia cult somtin, e kom dey lik say dem dey blin. To go de skul, dem no fit go again, to go de farm, dem no wan go again, to de go fishin, dem no wan go again. Onli tin wey dem dey wait for, e get one language wey dem dey cal, chopin don kom. Lik naw if to say dem no kno say yu bi fada, as yu kom dem for say dem driv one blak car kom my haus, kom chif haus so na chopin. So, wen dey say chopin, dem go say oga, find us somtin nah, mak I bab my hed, I wan wash, fin me somtin nah. Na de onli de ting wey dem dey do bikos devu don blin dia eye dem no longa rememba to go fishin, to go fam. Na de tin wey kom hapen to dem.

AN: E get som pipu naw if yu ass dem say wetin dey hapun wey we yu don enta insid dis kain tin, dem go tel u say awa wota fish sef no dey insid again, our land e no good mak we fam again, skul sef no dey wey dey go. Bot as u tel me say skul dey naa, na dem naw wey enta bad ting, wan pesin go tel yu wan tin an anoda pesin go tel yu anoda wan. Bot yu kno say for Afrika, mosly na from una wey bi chif na im wen pesin wan hia tru stor, na im e dey kom bikos we dey respet chifs, we dey,

evribodi go say dis pesin no sopos tel lie. Naw, Wetin I wan mak I ass yu again na wetin go mak us si beta tin for de society. Naw, yu bi member for MOSOP?

PFTDGG: In MOSOP we hav mani ogans. Evribodi in Ogoni is MOSOP den in dat MOSOP we kom get difren bodi bodi bodi wey dey. Na COTRA, COTRA na Council of Traditional Rulers under MOSOP. Anoda exampu, we get NYCOP, NYCOP na National Youth Council, al de yut in Ogoni, is unda NYCOP even tichas dey insid MOSOP, dia own bodi dey, even tradas get dia own, women dey cal dia own FOWA, women grup wey dey insid MOSOP. De tin bi say evribodi wey dey Ogoni na MOSOP, de grup wey yu fin yursef into na im yu go dey under. Al dat group group group wey dey, na under MOSOP. So, for naw, I bi MOSOP member, I bi COTRA. Na so e dey.

AN: Yu no say dis MOSOP, na him bi…

PFTDGG: Enta mout… Umbrela.

AN: Umbrela an as yu tok am na everi pesin wey bi Ogoni, im dey MOSOP. We don si weti MOSOP don bifo an wen we dey tok abaut wetin MOSOP don do bifo, we dey tok abaut wetin Ken Saro-Wiwa bin do an Ken Saro-Wiwa don tok am an im don do am say si oo, si wetin do, una sopos do somtin we go mak us hapi so dat dis our land, evritin go dey go well. Naw, dis pesin don die go wit oda pipu wey bin dey dia. Naw, hu bi de pipu wey dey cari dis MOSOP doin de ting wey Ken Saro-Wiwa neva do finish bifo im die?

PFTDGG: Wel, fada, I go tel yu de tru tru wey dey or wetin I kno. Maybe wetin I kno no fit bi true true, bot de wan wey I kno na im bi de tru tru wey afta Ken Saro-Wiwa mani mani pipu don rule lik Ledum Mitee, an odas. Naw na dis curent MOSOP presiden Legborsi Pyagbara, dem kom politicis dat tin wey KenSaro-Wiwa no bin do lik dat.

AN: Hmm.

PFTDGG: Na de tin wey com spoil MOSOP for Ogoni people.

AN: So, MOSOP don spoil?

PFTDGG: MOSOP no dey as e sopos dey. De tin wey mak I tok like dat bi say, as I tok bifo, de wan wey I kno na im bi de tru tru tin wey I dey tel yu.

AN: Hmm.

PFTDGG: Bot e fit bi lie lie to anoda pesin. I dey tok mai own.

AN: Anitin wey yu tok na somtin wey i go hia.

PFTDGG: So anitim wey dem cari presiden giv yu, yu kom tak am lik yur pesinal biznes, yu no go tok de min of de pipu again. Na so I undastan am. Like naw, dem bin dey tok of UNEP Report. I get de copi of dat UNEP Report bikos… cominiti hia involv wey dem go kom do de cleanup for. Dis mai cominiti hia. Bot de tin bi say anitim wey dem wan do dat tin MOSOP pipu, Shell go kom, wen Shell wan kom dis oda presiden go say, Shell no go kom Ogoni Shell no go kom Ogoni, im go go for radio go tok. Shell go cal am kom Abuja, dem go setu am, im no go tok ani bad tin abaut Shell again. NYCOP ciaman go kom, if dem no do lik dis, UNEP Report, like dis like dis, yu tok tok tok for radio, dat pipu go cal yu. Ken Saro-Wiwa Associates, Gani Topba to, as a lida of dat group im go for radio, if Shell try kom for oil explorashon in Ogoniland Ogoni pipu no go agree. Wen dem tok lik dat, dat pipu go kom cal am go Abuja, al dis tins kom mak dis UNEP Report kom dey get

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ton ton ton ton. Awa lidas somtimes, bikos of pesinal intres, dem no fit do wetin sopos to bi. Na de sam tin wey kom hapun, lik I tok bifo, al dis cot grup kom get stand for dis awa place wey bifo e no bin dey bikos yu de lida wan use dis pesin or use dis oda pesin, fin wetin for yur own belle alone for yur own chop chop, e kom mak yu no fit do wetin u sopos do. Na de tin. Politiks don enta, as politiks na im mak wen yu si say Nigerian govment wan tok lik dis, u wey bi lida for one grup go go for radio I no gree, I no gree, dem go cal yu. Na politiks wey dem put insid…

AN: Enta mout… Mak dem go giv yu de moni

PFTDGG: Mak dem go give yu de moni. Al dat tin na politiks wey dem put insid.

AN: Den yu go kip kwayet.

PFTDGG: Eee, mak I jus use dis wan. Awa presiden Muhammad Buhari, im bin kom durin im kampain, im tok say de fes tin wey im go do im go do Ogoni cleanup. Dis UNEP Report, im go impliment am. Den, im kom go to India for tritment kom send im vice president to kom Ogoni hia, Gokana Bodo hia, dat place wey yu dey hia piim piim piim...

AN: Hmm.

PFTDGG:: Kom flagof UNEP Report sins 2015. Dis is…

AN: Enta mout… 2018.

PFTDGG:: kampain go suun stat for 2019 elecshon dem neva do anitin, anitim wey dem si say Ogoni pipu go tok, no bi pipu wey dey up ooo, pipu wey de down na im go tok bikos pipu wey up yu go shake bodi lik dis dem setu yu, yu comot. De pipu wey don dey groun, wey dey down, dem kom tel dem say dem go kom giv dem fri medika kia. De fri medika kia dem no do am wel. I paticipat in dat fri medika kia. Dem tel mi say dem cal me for propa tritment. I giv dem two of mai fone nombas so dat dem go fit cal mi, dem no cal. Dem bin… Fryde/Satode las wik. I wait, chage mai fone so dat dem no go say na battery. De rizin wey make I giv dem de two lines bi say so dat if network no dey dis wan…

AN: Enta mout… e go dey de oda wan. Hmm.

PFTDGG: Dem no cal. Al na wetin? Politiks wey dem put insid. So, all dis tins bi say de, from de top, de nashonal, dat is de presidency, get im own magu-magu wey im dey play. Yu get to state im get im own magu-magu wey im de play. Yu kom get to de grasruts naw, e get magu-magu wey dem dey play insid al de lidaship wey de insid dis kontri na im kom… dis awa Ogoni culture.

AN: So, yu tink say dis tin wey MOSOP dey do naw e don afect evribodi for Ogoniland wit dis magu-magu wey MOSOP don go join?

PFTDGG: Veri wel, e don afect mani pipu.

AN: Siriosly. Naw, wetin u tink say we go do wey go bring ansa wey go help us for dis Ogoniland for al dis problems? Al dis bois wey dey cari gons naw, wetin yu tink say we go do wey go help us, wey go cari dis bois mak dem do somting wey go benefit us?

PFTDGG: Bifo I ansa dat kweshon wey yu tok, bifo awa presiden kom in papa, im tok say im go pay five five tauzan to al indigins of Naijiria, an uptil naw im neva pay anibodi dat tin im jus tok am like dat, de tin kom dey lik dat. Den, as dem tok tu say 'an idle mind is a devil's workshop,' de onli

tin wey dem fit do so dat al dis tin we go fit coret am wey no go tu hapun again, mai suggestion maybe difren from anoda pesin own, bot mai own numba one: mak Naijiria remove embago on emploiment so dat dem fit emploi pipu. We no say dem dey employ pipu bot na man no man.

AN: Hmm.

PFTDGG: Lik, for dis ofis naw, dem fit say we nid ten wokas, onli yu wey bi de oga wey don tok, bifo im tel mi say we nid ten pesins, yu don tak yur own five, yu tel dis oda pesin mak im bring tree, dem don shia am finis. Dem dey employ bot Naijiria say embago on emploiment dem no dey employ. If to say dem emploi, som of dis krime rate go redus, e for dey redus. Exampu naw, for lokal govment dem get sikuriti, dem get laboras, bot al de laboras don old die finis, which pipu wey dem tak fil de gap? No sikuriti wey dey for de skuls wey dey for dis lokal govment. No skul wey sikuriti dey. Bot bifo, dem bin get six sikuriti men, tree for day, tree for nite, den if yu don wok for one wik, dem go do shiftin. Bot al dis ting dem no do am again, al dis tins, if to say dem bin dey do am, crime rate for redus. Somtimes na hungri dey mak pesin go do bad ting.

AN: Hmm.

PFTDGG: For naw, mak I tak maisef as exampu, since morning I neva chop, an I kom si pesin plantain wey dey, for mi to get somtin wey go enta mai belle chop, if I no fit go, I go send pesin, go cut dat plantain kom, evin dou I go giv yu two hundred Naira, if yu cut am giv mi, I don send anoda pesin to go comit anoda krim. Mi too don comit bikos na mi send am. So, de onli tin bi say if to say dem remov embago from emploiment an dem stat to dey emploi pipu, pipu kom wok somtin kom dey gud, de kos of tins wey dey maket dem redus am, al dis tin for dey redus.

AN: Bot u no tink say bikos, bifo we bin tok am bifo, de chifs wey dey Ogoniland lik u naw, ur own pipu wey una rule dis pipu for Ogoniland, u tink say una no get big job wey una go do wey evribodi go join hands wey una go do dis tin wey go make dis bois stop dis tins wey dem dey do?

PFTDGG: Evribodi dey try, how dem go fit do so dat dis bois dem no go do dat kain tin bot de tin don enta dia blod.

AN: So, naw, we no get anitin wey we go do?

PFTDGG: Onli tin bi say u go ingage dem, if u ingage dem dem dey busy.

AN: Dat wan don do, I don hia dat wan.

PFTDGG: E go mak dem to, for exampu naw, u cari pesin wey dey do al dis kain krim put for wer im go stat wok by 7am close by 7 in de evnin, bai dat 7 in de evnin wey im kom onli to baf, chop, im don taya, im go slip. Im no go get tim to go comit krim again. Erli monin tomoro arand 6:30 im don get up baf fin sumtin put for belle wake comot go wok. Even dou na to go put tiket for pipu wey dey for maket, ivin dou na to go swip road, im no get tim…

AN: Cuts in… I don hia dat wan. Awa tim don go. Mak I ass yu one las kweshon naw, al dis tins wey u tel me, I lik dey way u tok am, naw, yu don tel me dis tru tru tok wey u don tok, wit mi na bikos yu don no mi I bi fada abi anibodi wey kom mit yu hia yu fit tel am dis kin tok?

PFTDGG: Yes! Lik pesin wey dey rule pipu, no bi bikos say u bi fada mak mi to tel yu de tru tru tok. Bikos, for mai posishon wey I dey, if I lie to pipu, wich mins I no bi de pesin wey dey der. To respet dat mai tron I sopos bi sombodi wey bi say na onli tru tru tok I go tok. So no bi bikos of say I

kno yu bifo or we don si bifo, bot for mai posishon as dey paramon rula of dis cominiti, I sopos to bi sombodi dat hav wan tok, dat is to say, onli de trut an notin bot de trut.

AN: Tank yu, tank yu veri moch. I apriciat. I tank yu. We go jus dey wok to si haw we go fit solv al dis problems for Ogoniland. Tank yu!

PFTDGG: Tank yu fada.

AN: Tank yu!

Appendix 6:

Participant observation coding note

Appendix 7:

Ethical approval letter

MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY,
MAYNOOTH, CO. KILDARE, IRELAND

**Maynooth
University**
National University
of Ireland Maynooth

Dr Carol Barrett
Secretary to Maynooth University Research Ethics Committee

15 May 2017

Samuel Terwase Udogbo
Department of Sociology
Maynooth University

RE: Application for Ethical Approval for a project entitled: Youth Activism:
Participatory Action Research in the Niger Delta, Nigeria

Dear Samuel,

The Ethics Committee evaluated the above project and we would like to inform you that
ethical approval has been granted.

Any deviations from the project details submitted to the ethics committee will require
further evaluation. This ethical approval will expire on 31 May 2019.

Kind Regards,

Dr Carol Barrett
Secretary,
Maynooth University Research Ethics Committee

C.c.   Dr Laurence Cox
       Maynooth University Department of Sociology

Reference Number
SRESC-2017-031

Appendix 8:

Research Information

RESEARCH TOPIC: *Youth Activism: Participatory Action Research in the Niger*

Delta, Nigeria

The political struggle as regards resource control, which has made the Niger Delta region a famous site of youth-led violence informs this research. The research is to examine the issues of socioeconomic and political inequalities and it consequent result amongst the Ogoni people; the idea of social struggle instantiated by Ken Saro-Wiwa in the Ogoni movement. Thus, the research aims: **(i)** To identify and examine the essential questions around nonviolent action as effective method to challenging socio-economic and political injustices; **(ii)** To investigate the youth understanding of their personal experiences and the surrounding events through settings informed by nonviolence theory, and **(iii)** To explore the youth potentials that might bring new insights and ideas that leads to action for change.

The research questions are: **(i)** What is the response of the youth (MOSOP) to the current socio-economic and political injustices in Ogoni land? **(ii)** What are the strategies that can lead the youth to a renewed enthusiasm for constructive social action? **(iii)** How can the youth create new opportunities and capacity for self development and self-determination?

Since the research aims at empowerment/capacity development, it adopts the Participatory Action Research which is a qualitative research methodology that is considered democratic, equitable, liberating and life enhancing (Koch & Kralik, 2002); the qualitative features of an individual's feelings, views and patterns are revealed without any manipulation from the researcher. Thus, the ultimate goal is to allow participants to be active in making informed decisions during the process of the research in order to impart social change (MacDonald, 2012). The research adopts three data collection methods: **Semi-structured Interviews**, **Focus Groups** & **Participant Observations**. This requires dialogic engagement with those who will give their consent to share their experiences in relation to the aims and questions of the research as outlined above. Participants will be selected from the MOSOP group; a cross section of villagers in Bomu, K-Dere and Bodo; related NGO group(s); and a cross section of Church and political agents. These will freely share information related to the subject being researched and the information will be used to complete a PhD thesis. Participants will be given a name of a counsellor/doctor in case of any experience of stress or reaction following participation.

All manual and electronic data collected will be stored safely and securely; electronic devices will be saved on my encrypted iCloud storage system. For the sake of confidentiality, all manual data will be assigned a key code. Data recorded on any portable device will be downloaded and save on my encrypted iCloud storage system as soon as the interview is over. In line with the Maynooth University Research Integrity Policy, both hard and digital data will be destroyed ten years after the completion of the study.

Note: *It must be recognized that, in some circumstances, confidentiality of research data and records may be overridden by courts in the event of litigation or in the course of investigation by lawful authority. In such circumstances the University will take all reasonable steps within law to ensure that confidentiality is maintained to the greatest possible extent.*

Consent form 1 & 2

Name:	Address/Dept.	Email:	Telephone:	Role in the project:
Samuel Udogbo	Sociology Department, Room 34, Auxilia Building.	samuel.udogbo.2017@mumail.ie	+353 1 708 3659	Research Student
Dr. Laurence Cox	Sociology Department, Room 3.1, Auxilia Building.	laurence.cox@nuim.ie	+353 1 7083985	Supervisor

Please Initial Box

1.   I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2.   I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.

3.   I agree to take part in the above study.

4.   I agree to the interview / focus group / participant observations being audio recorded

6.   I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications

Note: *If during your participation in this study you feel the information and guidelines that you were given have been neglected or disregarded in any way, or if you are unhappy about the process, please contact the Secretary of the Maynooth University Ethics Committee at research.ethics@nuim.ie or +353 (0)1 708 6019. Please be assured that your concerns will be dealt with in a sensitive manner.* **Primary data will be anonymised and retained for a period of ten years from publication as outlined in the University's Research Integrity Policy.**

Name of Participant	Date	Signature

Name of Researcher	Date	Signature

Name:	Address/Dept.	Email:	Telephone:	Role in the project:
Samuel Udogbo	Sociology Department, Room 34, Auxilia Building.	samuel.udogbo.2017 @mumail.ie	+353 1 708 3659	Research Student
Dr. Laurence Cox	Sociology Department, Room 3.1, Auxilia Building.	laurence.cox@nuim.i e	+353 1 7083985	Supervisor

PARTICIPANT:

Name:

Age:

Location:

Ethnicity:

Religion:

Please Initial Box

2.	I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

3.	I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.

3.	I agree to take part in the above study.

4.	I agree to the interview / focus group / participant observations being audio recorded

7.	I agree to the use of my name in publications

Note: *If during your participation in this study you feel the information and guidelines that you were given have been neglected or disregarded in any way, or if you are unhappy about the process, please contact the Secretary of the Maynooth University Ethics Committee at research.ethics@nuim.ie or +353 (0)1 708 6019. Please be assured that your concerns will be dealt with in a sensitive manner.* ***Primary data will be anonymised and retained for a period of ten years from publication as outlined in the*** <u>***University's Research Integrity Policy***</u>***.***

Name of Participant	Date	Signature

Name of Researcher	Date	Signature

Feedback for Participants from Research Findings

This is a follow up on the findings of the research we both participated in last year. It is to keep you informed and to give you the opportunity to reflect and feed back into the shape and process of the research. It is to encourage you and to demonstrate that your participation is important and that you are part of the process. Also, to make you realise that the process is relevant to your needs.

☛ **Social relationship:**

Key findings- On the issue of social relationship in Ogoni, there was a consensus since the narrative shared during the research process. That, the Ogoni society was peaceful. However, the relationship in the current Ogoni society goes against the principles of the Oppressive Order Master (OOM) frame; The *Miideekor* frame; and the Otherworldly frame (OF) was adopted by all. The Ogoni interpersonal relationships is weaved within the three frames that are the Ogoni original cultural background. They give clarity of vision.

FEEDBACK…

☛ **Political and Economic Marginalisation:**

Key findings- Research finding established that, oil discovery in Ogoni is the cause of the gross social, political and economic marginalisation of the people, their culture and their ideas. That both the external and internal factors addressed in the findings chapter are major issues of concern. Research adequately addressed issues affecting Ogoni women- in the domestic and institutional spheres. Findings confirm that women experience marginalisation doubly but have promoted a generalised consciousness about women and their strategic role in the Ogoni society and on the platform of MOSOP.

FEEDBACK…

☛ **Divide and Rule:** *Discriminatory politics***:**

Key findings- Research finding assert that the Ogoni issue is traced back to historical antecedent of the British colonial legacy that has become a major tool used by the government to oppress the minority ethnic groups in the country. The collusion between the leaders of the country with the multinational oil companies who perpetrate the disastrous divide and rule game causing impoverishment of the people of Ogoniland. It is the case that foreign aid and rents from natural resources have provide rulers with substantial resources to buy off people, especially those who oppose them, and caused disadvantageous differential treatment amongst them.

FEEDBACK…

☛ **Structural Violence:**

Key findings- Major finding on the issue of violence is that the Ogoni society was very peaceful and that violence in Ogoni is sponsored by the government to enable it have access to oil. That it was an issue of

great concern to both youth and elders. For the youth, exclusion is at the heart of youth violence, disengagement from societal values; involvement in criminal activity such as cultism; and experiences of victimisation. Youth who feel connected to and engaged with the broader society, and who feel valued and safe and see a positive future for themselves in it, will not experience conditions of exclusion and will not commit violence.

FEEDBACK…

MOSOP: Ogoni Grievances is legitimate:

Key findings- The Ogoni people feel frustrated and alienated, and it is this feeling of injustice that has triggered their agitation. Some participants feel MOSOP alienates the people who ultimately hold the power to change the story. The fear that their protest activities fizzle and the danger that some activists have resorted to clientelism. The need to focus on building a radical alliance and advocating for increasing good tactics that appeal to those who fear that the current situation ends their chance of success. Crucial amongst what I think their narratives reveal are:

- shared interest in negotiating and coming up with coherent agenda. Relying on Ken Saro-Wiwa's template, participants observed the need to project themselves as strong witnesses to their Ogoni identity;

- despite the increasing sophistication of the propaganda machines, participants saw the need to put out contradictory messages and actions to present a unified front and assert control over their life and property even as there are rifts between communities and in the various groups in the movement;

- maintaining relations with both local and international networks, which have more solid agenda as regards leadership structures and issues considered to be of importance;

- for the rural illiterate population, there should be effort in place for town hall meetings in order to educate them for the purpose of ending alienation, marginalisation and disillusionment of the local members; and

- to put pressure on the government by highlighting the culture of impunity and demanding accountability. And, to explain to the Ogoni populations the necessity of staying with the movement rather than yielding to the quick-fix solution.

FEEDBACK…

Freedom and Development:

key findings- For development to occur in Ogoniland, participant suggest there must be a return to their Ogoni cultural value that speaks from the point of view of mutual benefit- a democratic fair model that is in line with the vision of their founding fathers. The liberty of the individual and the communities to exercise their thought and to be free to participate in the affairs of their society.

FEEDBACK…