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Inter-communal Violence in sub-Saharan Africa: the Role of Corporate Social Responsibility in Nigeria's Oil Producing Region

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Abstract

We examine the impact of multinational oil companies' (MOCs) corporate social responsibility (CSR) using global memorandum of understanding (GMOU) on mitigating the resurgence of inter-communal violence in Niger Delta, Nigeria. Using explanatory research design, the study adopted mixed methods to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses of the study. Primary data were generated from a sample of 1200 respondents selected from all the nine states of the region using multiple sampling techniques. We carried out both survey with structured questionnaire and key informant interview to ascertain the effect of CSR on the resurgence of inter-communal violence in the region. Results from the use of a logit model and use of propensity score matching to determine the mean difference between variables in the treatment and control shows that a bantam but significant CSR interventions have been made by the MOCs in the areas that will discourage people from engaging in inter-communal violence. The findings suggest that an increase in CSR targeted at improving access to cultivatable land, enhanced fishing space, reducing multi-dimensional poverty, as well as reducing frustration and indignation; will dissuade local people from involvement in inter-communal violence.

Keywords: Oil extraction communities, inter-communal violence, corporate social responsibility, Nigeria's Niger Delta.

1. Introduction

Communal violence is the type carried out across ethnic or communal lines. The violent parties have deep support for their respective groups, and victims are picked based upon group membership (Pauly, 2022). Communal violence, as a term, includes conflict, riots and such between communities of divergent religious faith or ethnic origins (Okoi, 2020). Communal violence, in various parts of the world, could be referred to as any of these given phrases: mass racial violence, ethnic violence, pinter-communal violence, non-State conflict, violent civil disorder, minorities' unrest, and ethno religious violence (Klinken, 2007; Macini, 2005; McCauley, 2013). Inter-communal violence takes in violent conflicts between residents of two villages or communities mostly seen as being communal militias (Barak, 2002). Inter-communal violence is found in different continents of the world: Africa, Asia, Europe, the Americas and Australia (Watson, 2023; Pauly, 2022; Macini, 2005). According to Brosche (2015), the most common conflict activaters of inter-communal violence are land and local power disagreements, direct attacks, (attempted) kidnapping and even looting. In Nigeria, land and boundary disputes have been main causes of lethal violence and communal volatility in the expanse of the Niger Delta. Disputes over the division of the benefits of oil production have fueled conflict within and between communities in the Niger Delta. For many years the standard oil company practice was to designate certain operational locations as 'host communities', thereby entitling residents to payment for land use for oil facilities, together with additional development goods (Uduji *et al*, 2020). Host community status brought with it considerable benefits in the form of jobs on local oil projects, contracts, and compensation to those who successfully laid claim to the land, and fishing grounds where drilling and production activities take place. This practice has caused competition over territory, as well as perceptions of inequality in gaining access to resources and social services. Community identities harden in relation to their neighbours, and occasionally these struggles become lethal.

Meanwhile, the economy of Nigeria heavily relies on the oil and gas sector, which raises up to 95% of export incomes, 80 to 85% of government proceeds, and about 32% of gross domestic products (African Economic Outlook, 2017). Nigeria is Africa's largest oil producer and is one of the top ten globally. The recoverable revenue of Nigeria's oil were estimated at 36.2 billion barrels in January 2007; yet, with all the country's relative oil wealth, GDP per capita is \$2,400, and poverty is simply common as about 50% of the populace live on less than \$1.25 per day (African Competitiveness Report, 2017). Oil and gas reserves are located in the Southern part of the country known as the Niger Delta. The region is marked by lack and underdevelopment. Since oil extraction is a capital rather than labour intensive industry, it ends up providing little

employment to the people (African Development Bank, 2011; African Development Report, 2015). The region is further badly off due to the challenging geographical terrain which makes the cost of infrastructure higher as well as the effects of the wreckage of the environmental caused, in part, by the consequences of oil extraction (gas flaring, oil spills, etc.) on traditional industries such as agriculture (Watts, 2004). Meanwhile, multinational oil companies (MOCs) participate in a plethora of corporate social responsibility undertakings in the Niger Delta and other part of the country. Each year, they invest in social projects and programmes in communities which are primarily in the Niger Delta expanse. The initial investments went into agricultural development programmes in the early sixties but have grown over the years to cover small businesses, education health care, roads and civil infrastructure, and water projects which could be beneficial to the host communities. As years passed by, MOCs have improved on their way of engagement with local communities to execute these projects (Ite, 2007). It led the MOCs into introducing a new way of working with communities called the Global Memorandum of Understanding (GMoU) in 2006. The GMoUs is, without doubt, an important shift in CSR method of operation, placing emphasis on clearer and accountable processes, steady communication with the grassroots, sustainability and avoidance of conflict (SPDC, 2013). Under the terms of the GMoUs, the communities choose what they want while MOCs provide the necessary fund of execution for five years, making sure the communities do not face financial hiccups as they execute their community development plans (Chevron, 2014). This system is a replacement for the previous method in which MOCs agreed to hundreds of separate development projects with individual communities and proceed to manage them directly and distinctly (Chevron, 2017). Before 2012 came to an end, MOCs have signed agreements with 33 GMoU clusters, covering 349 communities. That is about 35% of the local communities around their business operations in the Niger Delta expanse. They also successfully executed a total of 723 projects through the GMoUs, with a total funding of about \$117 million (SPDC, 2018).

Nevertheless, the advent of GMoU model in the Niger Delta has been seen by many as a way devised by MOCs to repel public criticism of their actions, and a means to evade government regulation (Slack, 2012; Eweje, 2006; Asgil, 2012). As a concept, GMoU has been seriously criticized, and there is now, as it were, an intense argument over its value and practical implications (Idemudia, 2014). While the "Yes" group view it as a vehicle for potentially bolstering an old dynamic in business-community relationships, detractors see it as a policy for new tasks to be demanded of old institutions. This variance in perceptions unvaryingly sets the background for the CSR – GMoU model debate, placing those in favour of maintaining an already well-establish business-community relationship against those who insist that business-community relationships be made to adapt to altering community values (Mamudu, *et al*, 2021; Ekhator,

2014; Ekhatior and Iyiola-Omisore, 2021; Egbon *et al*, 2018; Amodu, 2017; Renouard; Lado, 2012; Lompo and Trani, 2013; Marchant, 2014, Asongu *et al*, 2019 and Tamuno, 2020). Following the foregoing conflicting awareness of the MOCs CSR initiatives, we hypothesize that the GMoUs have failed to significantly lower the main drivers of inter-communal violence in the Niger Delta. Thus, this paper is a plus to the public-private partnership debate on inter-communal violence as a social issue from the CSR standpoint of MOCs in four areas that have received serious interest in the literature.

- To what degree can the resurgence of inter-communal violence be seen to have spread among the local communities of the Niger Delta in Nigeria?
- How has GMoUs interventions of MOCs impacted on oil – producing communities of Nigeria's Niger Delta?
- Can it be stated that GMoUs undertakings of MOCs have helped to lower the resurgence of inter-communal violence in Nigeria's oil-producing communities?
- What is the significance of bringing down the resurgence of inter-communal violence over land and boundary disputes in Nigeria's oil producing communities?

1.1 Study hypothesis

A reemerging of inter-communal violence over land and boundary dispute in the Niger Delta persists with periodic incidents of violence, which could worsen communal and ethnic hostilities (PIND, 2023a). According to PIND (2023b), the incidents have given rise to a sequence of reprisal violence and killings in the oil-producing communities, with an increase of communal tensions and ethnic hostilities that have unfavorably affected the underlying forces of conflict and insecurity in the region. PIND (2023c) noted that the incidents of community conflict, as well as loss of life are causing extensive social, political, economic, humanitarian, and security consequences in the Niger Delta expanse of Nigeria. According to PIND (2023a), communal conflict is responsible for over 150 death toll in the Niger Delta between January 2021 and March 2023; besides, recent incidents show rising tensions as a result of intensification of inter-communal conflicts connected to disputes over land in the region. For instance, two residents were purportedly killed during a clash between some herders and farmers in Toru-Angiama community of Patani local government area (LGA) in Delta State. Then, in April, a man was stated to be shot during a clash between fishers from Oboro community in Burutu LGA and Alota community in Ughelli South LGA of Delta State. This particular incident reportedly increased the tension between the Ijaw (Oboro) and Urhobo (Alota) communities in the area. On May 3, 2023, occupants allegedly raised the alarm about an arranged attack over a land dispute between

Aladja community in Udu South-West LGA and Ogbe-Ijohin community in Warri also a South-West LGA in Delta State (PIND, 2023b).

Given how rampant the reemergence in inter-communal violence and insecurity have become in the region, in addition to the risk of sustainable peace and development, we posit that:

- MOCs have failed to engage in fruitful GMoU undertakings in oil-producing communities of Nigeria's Niger Delta.
- GMoU of MOCs has failed to substantially impact on lowering the reemergence of inter-communal violence in the oil-producing communities of Nigeria's Niger Delta.

The remaining parts of the paper are structured thus: provision of a brief background, literature and theoretical underpinnings (Section 2); description of method and materials (Section 3); presentation of empirical results and corresponding discussion (Section 4), and provision of concluding remarks, caveats and future research directions (Section 5).

2. Background, literature and theoretical underpinnings

2.1 History and types of conflict

From the record of NPC (2007), 32 million people reside in the Niger Delta (22% of Nigeria's total population), and 62% are not up to 30 years old. The region is very heterogeneous with more than 40 ethnic groups who speak as much as 120 mutually unintelligible languages and dialects (NDDC, 2001). The largest among them are the Ijaws; others include the Itsekiri, Ibibio-Efik, Urhobo, and Igbo sub-groups (NDDC, 2001). Historically, the two main sources of income in the region are fishing and agriculture. Not long after Nigeria's independence in 1960, conflicts between local communities, oil communities, and federal government started to occur. In 1966, Isaac Boro, leader of the Niger Delta Volunteer Force, declared independence of the Niger Delta's People's Republic calling on oil companies to enter negotiation with his government instead of doing so with the federal authorities (NDDC, 2004). Since the 1967 failed war for Biafra, successive military governments have run the country from 1969 – 1999. During the three civilian administration since 1999, the state and local governments in the Niger Delta have been bold in speaking out their misery over what they see as a concentration of resources and power at the center (UNDP, 2006). Communities have had conflicts with oil companies, with one another, and even with the security forces over a series of concerns including payments, land procurement, damage of environment (Francis *et al*, 2011). Armed groups have engaged on systematic campaigns against the government and oil companies to grant them their demands. Youths that have no job have often taken advantage of the situation to perpetrate criminal acts, including kidnapping and the theft of oil (Watts, 2004). Conflict occurs both amid and within communities over being able to access the gains from governments and companies. Being labelled a 'host community' to an oil facility comes with benefits, but as history has it, this practice has aggravated jealousy and fighting among communities, resulting in clashes over 'oil boundaries' too (Newsom, 2011; Okoro, 2009; Udo, 2020; Taofiq and Abdullahi, 2019).

Previous studies on security development and peace in the Niger Delta, identified types of conflict in the region. According to Francis *et al* (2011), *Intra-community Conflict* is a common type of community conflict in the Niger Delta, where struggles develop over claims to customary authority within communities; or new power-brokers emerge to challenge traditional leaders. Also, disputes between individuals and groups arise over entitlement to oil company payments and their distribution. For example, in *Nembe*, youths questioned the authority of the traditional ruler in dealing with compensation payments; and violence ensued within the community and against oil companies. Likewise, Uduji *et al* (2023a) established *Inter-ethnic Conflict* as another type of conflict in the Niger Delta, where many conflicts between ethnic groups involve fears

over political rights, representation, and by extension control of local funds; and some conflicts are intensified by underlying historical antagonisms. For example, the *Ijaw-Itsekiri conflict* in the Warri area of Delta State has involved historical disputes over the control of trade, ethnicity of customary ruler-ship, and between 1997 and 2003, a dispute over which ethnicity should be the headquarters of a new Local Government Area (LGA). However, our focus in this study is on *Inter-communal* type of conflict in the Niger Delta.

2.2 Conceptualization of inter-communal violence

The term communal violence was made up by European colonial authorities as they struggle to cope with outbreaks of violence between religious, ethnic and disparate groups in their colonies, mostly Africa and South Asia, in the early twentieth century (Brosche, 2015; Pauly, 2022; Barak, 2002; Salawu, 2010). According to Watson (2023), the category of inter-communal violence has been progressively mobilized to interpret subnational violence in modern-day Africa. As the language of ethnic violence wore out of discussions of conflict in Africa by the mid-2000s, inter-communal violence gradually took its place. Often concentrating on subnational violence concerning irregular forces, the thorough study of inter-communal violence is consigned to the margins of civil war studies, though it is progressively well-represented in reports from research establishments on local violence and peace building in Africa, as well as more technical research on militias and post-conflict security (McCauley, 2013). Across academic and makers of policy, inter-communal violence has been hypothesized as arising from something of a parallel domain to the national political dynamics in war-ravaged or unstable polities (Klinken, 2007; Barak, 2002; Macini, 2005; Okoi, 2020). The grouping of inter-communal violence and its associated theoretical claims are noticeable in policy as well as grey literature and are becoming entrenched into more typical academic conflict exploration (Watson, 2023). Although inter-communal violence was originally framed as a spur-of-the-moment or impromptu mob violence associated to religious provocation, years (decades) of scholarship have faced up to the generalizations, latent political conservatism, and colonialist inflexions of these portrayals (Klinken, 2007; Macini, 2005). These accounts accentuated the crucial role played by social, business, and political elites in provoking and sanctioning communal conflicts. There has been attack on the delicate yet potent ability of the communalism discourse to naturalize the idea that violence of that nature is simply an extension of enduring tensions between two communities (Watson, 2023). Creating a distinction between communal conflict and communal war, Barak (2002) noted that communal conflict is assumed to be a non-state armed conflict between social groups that operate in certain identity lines, such as language, ethnicity, and culture; while communal wars are considered to be communal conflicts wasting the lives of not less than 1,000 people annually. Looking at these

accounts of inter-communal violence, there is a sense that the foundational theory at work vary more than they agree, despite somehow giving the idea of referring to the same thing. It is also key to be aware of the fact that most literature having to do with inter-communal violence does not state what the term means (Klinken, 2007; Macini, 2005).

Nevertheless, in the context of this study, we described the term *Inter-communal Conflict* in accordance with Uduji *et al* (2023b), where oil wells and installations bring benefits for host communities, but their location in relation to community boundaries may be unclear, since land ownership is generally 'customary', rather than 'registered', and Court resolutions may take up to ten years; and local vigilante groups may be called up to defend community interest and potential benefits from revenues or jobs would add urgency to the conflict. For example, relations between Soku, Elem-Sangama and Oluasiri communities in Rivers and Bayelsa States have been tensed due to a dispute over ownership of a gas plant. The dispute was intensified by the oil company when it unwittingly named the facility 'Soku Gas Plant' without local consultation. Boundary disputes as well as illegal bunkering activities and high levels of youth unemployment complicated the resolution of the conflict.

2.3 Theoretical underpinnings

Years and years of oil exploration in the Niger Delta expanse obviously have affected the environment and lives of its occupants, while oil spills and haphazard flaring of gas has in the same way caused ecological damage in the region (Kalama and Asanebi, 2019). Thus, this study brought together the frustration-aggression theory (Breuer and Elson, 2017), the relative deprivation theory (Walker and Pettigrew, 1984), and the conceptualization of CSR in African context (Visser, 2006) in expounding the fact that environmental pollution emanating from the activities of multinational oil companies unfavorably affected the land and the people of the Niger Delta expanse. The devising of the frustration-aggression theory was directed on the limited meddling with an anticipated realization of a desired goal on hostile (emotional) aggression, hence, entailing that when people are unable to actualize their desire in any given system or society, they end up responding through the display of violent traits and tendencies. Recent resurgence of loss of life revolving around communal violence in Nigeria's Niger Delta (PIND, 2023a) have revealed that the frustration-aggression theory is proposed to suggest to scholars and researchers of human nature, that when aggression occurs such should have a suspicious eye on the likelihood of the organism or group being confronted by frustration; and that when interference with individual or group habits is viewed, such should be on the lookout for, amid other things, aggression (Kalama and Asanebi, 2019). The frustration-aggression theory postulates that aggression is caused by frustration in people, which when not well managed, can turn into violence (aggression) when something elicits it (Breuer and Elson, 2017). Hence, relative

deprivation refers to the displeasure people feel when they compare their situation to those of others in a similar circle and find out that they have not enjoyed what their peers enjoy. In other words, it is a circumstance that is measured by likening the situation of one's group to that of those who are more advantaged. It is also seen as the conscious experience of a negative incongruity between legitimate anticipations and present reality (Walker and Pettigrew, 1984). The idea is used in the social sciences for describing feelings or measures of social, economic, or political deficiency that are relative rather than absolute. The concept of relative deprivation has significant consequences for both conduct and attitudes, including feelings of tension, political attitudes and involvement in collective action. Based on the scope of this study, one can come to the conclusion that the activities and loose practices of multinational oil companies in Niger Delta explicate why the inter-communal violence in the region intensifies.

Visser (2006) looked at the nature of CSR in African context by using Carroll's (1991) CSR Pyramid as a background for vivid analysis. Carroll's Pyramid has probably been seen as the most recognized model of CSR, with its four levels specifying the relative importance of economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic duties respectively. However, the utilization of CSR in Africa is used to question the correctness and relevance of Carroll's CSR Pyramid. It brought about the claim that if Carroll's basic four-part model is acknowledged as the standard, then, the relative priorities of CSR in Africa will most likely vary from the classic, American ordering. However, there is also the proposition that Carroll's CSR Pyramid may not really be the best model for comprehending CSR in general, particularly in Africa. Amaeshi *et al* (2006) have reasoned that the Nigeria conception of CSR remarkably vary from the Western version; and that CSR in Nigeria is to be targeted towards addressing the distinctiveness of socio-economic development problems of the country, taking its root from socio-cultural influences; in other words, not necessarily reflecting the popular Western standard/ anticipations of CSR. According to Frynas (2009), philanthropic initiatives as CSR by companies are predominant in Nigeria, thus, in emerging countries, the failure of government in providing amenities for its citizens heightens the roles of multinationals in CSR. Philanthropy, though, is not regarded as CSR in Western countries. Muthuri (2012), banking on the extant literature on CSR in Africa, postulated that the CSR issues prevailing in Africa include education and training, sports, economic and enterprise development, health and HIV/AIDS, environments, human rights, corruption, governance and accountability, poverty reduction, and community development. In consequence, this paper made use of a quantitative approach, but deliberates on the result from the frustration-aggression theory, the relative deprivation theory, and the African perception of CSR, looking at the role of cultural context in defining suitable CSR priorities and programmes for assuaging the return of inter-communal violence in the oil producing region of Nigeria.

3. Methods and materials

In this study, we made use of mixed method because our interest was to investigate the effect of determinant variables on the dependent variable so as to establish the relationship existing between the cause and effect of an occurrence. The more emphasis on quantitative method was because previous studies (Ajodo-Adebanjoko, 2017; Lompo and Trani, 2013; Renouard and Lado, 2012) reveal the paucity of quantitative methods in the research works on impact of CSR of MOCs via the global memorandum of understanding in the Niger Delta expanse of Nigeria. We adopted mixed methods to ensure full participation of the relevant stakeholders in conducting the study. The mixed methods were adopted in that the inputs of those being studied is paramount in identifying issues, proffering and implementing solutions, as well as monitoring and evaluating progress. We used the mixed methods with the aim of engaging all levels of residents in the processes of identifying issues and challenges in their communities as it concerns the MOCs and inter-communal conflicts, with the hope of proffering solutions. Hence, we conducted both Key Informant Interview (KII) and Focused Group Discussion (FGD) in order to generate some data used for the study. Also, we generated data from survey of representative sample of the region's population using structured questionnaires (SQ). The area of study consists the nine administrative States of the Niger Delta, Nigeria (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Constituent administrative states of the Niger Delta, Nigeria

Source: NDDC, 2004 /Authors' modification

3.1 Sample Size

We made use of Taro Yamane's (1973) formula for finite population to work out the surveyed sample size. For effective computation, the formula is stated mathematically as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \quad \text{Equation 1}$$

Where n = the sample size

N = total or finite population of the study area

e = level of significance (Limit of tolerable error)

1 = unity (constant)

With an estimated population of 42,637,086, the sample size was computed thus:

$$n = \frac{42,637,086}{1 + 42,637,086(0.05)^2} = n = \frac{42,637,086}{106,593.72} \quad n = 400$$

To further reduce the possible errors in the sample selection -- due to the size of the region covering entire south-south zone, parts of south-east and south-west zones -- we multiplied the computed sample size by three. Therefore, the total sample size utilized in the study was 1200 respondents.

3.2 Sampling procedure

A multi-staged sampling method was utilized in selecting the 1200 respondents surveyed in the study. Two local government areas (LGAs) were picked from each of the nine states in stage one. Then, in stage two, we chose four host communities from each of the selected LGAs. We intentionally picked two communities who are member of a cluster development board (CDBs) and two communities that are not. We took the former to be 'the CDB communities' while we referred to the later as 'non-CDB communities'. The CDB communities stand for the 'treatment group' while the non-CDB communities represent the 'control group'. In the last stage, we engaged the community leaders in randomly selecting 600 respondents from the treatment group and same number from the control group too. The sample was dispersed according to the population of the states as shown (Table 1)

Table 1. Sample size determination table

States	Total Population	% of total population	State Sample	Community sample	Treatment	Control
Abia	3,727,347	9	108	14	7	7
Akwaibom	5,482,177	13	156	20	10	10
Bayelsa	2,277,961	5	60	8	4	4
Cross River	3,866,269	9	108	14	7	7
Delta	5,663,362	13	156	20	10	10
Edo	4,235,595	10	120	15	8	8
Imo	5,408,756	13	156	20	10	10
Ondo	4,671,695	11	132	17	8	8
Rivers	7,303,924	17	204	26	13	13
	42,637,086		1200	150	75	75

Source: NPC, 2007/Authors' computation

3.3 Data collection

We collected data for this study using participatory rural appraisal (PRA) technique for the reason that the opinions of the people being studied are overriding when compared to the secondary data which most of the MOCs have. We used written structured questionnaire (SQ) and KII guides. The researchers and local research assistants directly administered the tools (SQ and KII) to the respondents. Selection of local research assistants was absolutely important because of the limitations of the researchers' knowledge of the territory and languages.

3.4 Analytical framework

We adopted method triangulation in the laborious analysis of the carefully handled data which was collected and collated from the field. The methods we made use of were both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The quantitative method was used for descriptive and inferential statistics. The mixed methods enabled us to answer the research questions as well as test the hypotheses. The results of the descriptive statistics were put forward in tables, figures and charts. For the inferential statistic, we put together both logit model and propensity score matching to evaluate the average treatment effect of the multinational oil companies' CSR using GMoUs as functions of selected socio-economic variables. For the logit model, we put to use modified form of Lompo and Trani (2013) in the estimation. For binominal response variables, the logit of natural logarithm of the odds ratios is generally put forward as shown below:

$$\text{Log } \frac{p_i}{1-p_i} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 + x_{i1} + \beta_2 + x_{i2} + \beta_3 + x_{i3} + \dots + \beta_n + x_{in} \quad \text{Equation 2}$$

In connection to the above, this study estimated the influence of MOCs' CSR investments using GMoU on inter communal violence in the region of Niger Delta Nigeria as follows:

$$\text{Log [ICV]} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{GMoU} + \beta_2 C_{1---n} + \beta_3 M + \mu \quad \text{Equation 3}$$

Where:

ICV = represents the dependent variable inter communal violence in the region

GMoU = the multinational oil companies' CSR using GMOU

C = other socio economic variables (Age, family/household size, employment/occupation, revenues and others)

M = other moderating variables and

μ = stochastic error term.

*In this model, the main parameter of interest is β_1 in terms of sign and significance.

4. Results and discussion

4.1 Descriptive analysis

The descriptive analysis of the survey responses starts with some of their demographic (age, marital status, family/household size), social (education), and economic (occupation, earnings) characteristic (Table 2). We analyzed these features because they aid in the understanding of the socio-economic and demographic variances between the treatment group and control group in the Niger Delta expanse.

Table 2 Socio- economic characteristics of the respondents.

Variables	Treatment Group			Control Group		
	Freq	%	Cum	Freq	%	Cum
Age of Respondents						
Less than 20 years	10	2	2	24	4	4
21-25 years	110	18	20	86	14	18
26-30 years	139	23	43	113	19	37
31 - 35 years	109	18	61	121	20	57
35 - 40 years	96	16	77	102	17	74
41 - 45 years	62	10	88	71	12	86
45 - 50 years	48	8	96	51	9	95
Above 50 years	26	4	100	32	5	100
	600	100		600	100	
Marital Status						
Single	102	17	17	110	18	18
Married	348	58	75	420	70	88
Widow	63	11	86	23	4	92
Divorced/Separated	87	15	100	47	8	100
	600	100		600	100	
Household Size						
1-4 Person	315	53	53	292	49	49
5-9 Person	198	33	86	214	36	84
10-14 Person	75	13	98	72	12	96
15 Person and above	12	2	100	22	4	100
	600	100		600	100	
Level of Education						
None	27	5	5	97	16	16
FSLC	273	46	50	282	47	63
WAEC/WASSCE	222	37	87	143	24	87
Degree and above	78	13	100	78	13	100
	600	100		600	100	

Primary Occupation						
Fishing	165	28	28	178	30	30
Trading	74	12	40	46	8	37
Farming	222	37	77	241	40	78
Employed in public/private sector	58	10	87	38	6	84
Handicraft	43	7	94	62	10	94
Others	38	6	100	35	6	100
	600	100		600	100	
Annual Income						
1000 - 50,000	19	3	3	92	15	15
51,000 - 100,000	85	14	17	105	18	33
101,000 - 150,000	125	21	38	155	26	59
151,000 - 200,000	128	21	60	97	16	75
201,000 - 250,000	119	20	79	73	12	87
251,000 - 300,000	82	14	93	56	9	96
Above 300,000	42	7	100	22	4	100
	600	100		600	100	
Value of receipts Through GMoU						
1000 - 100,000	98	16	16			
101,000 - 200,000	134	22	39			
201,000 - 300,000	186	31	70			
301,000 - 400,000	73	12	82			
401,000 - 500,000	57	10	91			
501,000 - 600,000	32	5	97			
Above 600,000	20	3	100			
	600	100				

Source: Computed from the field data by authors.

Analysis (Table 2) reveals that for the treatment group the average age is about 32 years, but about 34 for the control. This shows negligible difference, meaning that the age of respondents does not have serious impact on the receipts of CSR. In terms of marriage, about 17% of the respondents in the treatment group have never married, while for the control it is about 18%. Still in line with marriage, while about 26% of the treatment group were married before (widowed, divorces/separated), only about 12% of the control are in similar condition. This reveals that the GMoUs may have significantly contributed in assisting the ones married in their coping strategies. While just about 5% of the respondent in the treatment group are illiterates, about 16% of the control group falls into the same category. Furthermore, the findings also reveals that while about 28% of treatment are into fishing as basic job, as much as about 30% of the control are in similar

condition. Likewise, in the treatment group, about 12% are trader and 37% farmers; for the control, it is about 8% traders and 40 % farmer. Handicraft accounted for about 7% of treatment and 10% of control. Occupational engagement by either public or private sector makes up for 10% (treatment), while just about 6% of control are thus employed. This finding is in agreement with Ejumudo (2014), in that the implication puts forward that the employment status of the respondents is almost at the same level. However, it is necessary to note that, regardless of being in treatment or control, the average yearly revenue in most of the host communities is still unfortunately very low. The result shows that, in the treatment, the average earnings is still NGN200, 000 (about 430 USD) yearly while that of the control is NGN90, 000 (about 194 USD). This finding flows in line with Tamuno (2020), in that the average family/household size in the study area indicates that the rate of impoverishment is still very high as the control group live on 0. 922 USD per day while that of the treatment is an average of 2.05USD per day.

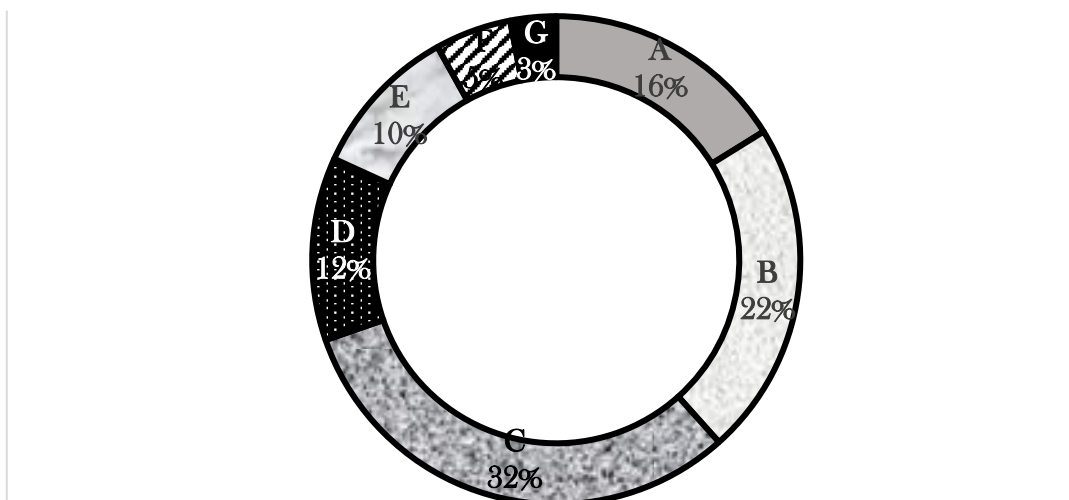


Figure 2. Percentage distributions of direct personal receipts of CSR by the respondent Niger Delta¹.

Source: Computed from the field data by authors.

Analysis (Figure 2) shows the dispersal of direct personal receipts of CSR by the respondent quantified. About 16% of the respondents have been given between NGN1, 000 and NGN100, 000 (about 2.2 to 200 USD) or below. Further analysis reveals that while about 22% have been given between NGN101,000 to NGN200,000 (about 202 to 400 USD), about 32% got between NGN201,000 and NGN300,000 (about 400 to 600 USD). Also, while about 12% got between

¹ A = 1,000 -100,000, B = 101,000 - 200,000, C = 201,000 - 300,000, D = 301,000 - 400,000, E = 401,000 - 500,000, F = 501,000 - 600,000, G = Above 600,000.

NGN301,000 and NGN400,000 (about 600 to 800 USD), about 10% of the respondents in the treatment have been given between NGN401,000 and NGN500,000 (about 800 to 1,000 USD). Still more, about 5% received between NGN601,000 and NGN600,000 (about 1,000 to 1200 USD), and 3% got above NGN600,000 (1200 USD). This finding assents to SPDC (2018), in that substantial number of people have experienced reasonable direct CSR intervention.

Table 3. Rating of MOCs' CSR intervention by the respondents as it concerns reducing the resurgence of inter communal violence in Niger Delta region.

Activities	Total E&P	Exxon Mobil	Chevron	Shell	Agip	Others	Average
Land cleaning and environmental manage to expand cultivatable lands and fishing space.	16	17	18	19	17	19	18
Re-purchasing lands privatizes by retired civil servants, ex-service men and politicians for communal usage	5	4	4	6	5	7	5
Setting and sponsoring of community vigilante group	12	11	9	10	11	13	11
Provision of farming and fishing inputs for both host community and neighbours	12	10	12	11	10	12	11
Enhancing alternative economic opportunities through skill accusation.	15	17	16	15	17	13	16
Employing youth of neighbouring community in unskilled and semi-skilled opportunities	14	12	13	13	12	7	12
Extending infrastructural development to neighbours of host communities	7	6	4	5	7	11	7
Reducing the effect of poverty via conditional cash transfer	6	8	6	8	6	5	7
Socio-political and economic mending of communities via sponsoring and encouraging the formation of CDBS	13	15	18	13	15	13	15
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Computed from the field data by authors

The result (Table 3) shows the rating of the multinational oil companies' CSR intervention by the respondents as it concerns bringing down the resurgence of inter communal violence in Niger Delta region. These simply display the CSR activities that most of the main MOCs have undertaken to curtail aggressions that worsens inter- communal violence. An average of about

18% of the CSR involvement in this area was put into land cleaning and environmental management to increase cultivatable lands and fishing space. Then, about 7% was put into re-purchasing lands privatized by retired civil servants, ex-service men and politicians for communal usage. This makes it obvious that about 25% were invested on space and land matters. It is so as a result of the major causes of inter-communal violence in the region being linked to access to land and boundaries. According to a key informant in one of the interviews:

Most often, when oil companies damage the lands and waters of the host communities, the communities are enforced to encroach on the lands and waters of their neighbours, yet will not want their neighbours to partake in the compensation from the oil companies.

This finding shares the same view with Uduji *et al* (2021), in that formal judicial institutions have been slow to assist when disputes over land and water arise. It may take up to ten years before a High Court judgment is obtain and even longer for subsequent petitions through the Appeals and Supreme Courts. In the absence of legal recourse, some aggrieved communities have concluded that there are few alternatives to the use of force in asserting their legitimate rights.

Next is provision of farming and fishing inputs for both host community and neighbours. It accounts for about 11%. This is to make sure that high yielding varieties and satisfactory technologies are made available in order to boost maximum productivity of the available spaces. During the KII, we also noted that involving the neighbouring community in this provision assists in encouraging communal acceptance and having a healthy relationship among the host community and their neighbours, thereby bringing down boundary dispute. Other major areas of CSR investment are: improving alternative economic openings via skill acquisition (about 16%); employing youth of neighbouring community in unskilled and semi-skilled openings (about 12%) and spreading infrastructural development to neighbours of host communities. These three precisely targets the youths of both the host communities and their neighbours. As a respondent opined during the KII:

Most communal and inter-communal violence in the region are executed by the youths, the youths also bears the brunt of such violence, but the level of frustration they experience at times makes them think violence is the only option. As some MOCs have incorporated the youths of neighboring communities in their CSR, level of frustrations is reduced, tolerance increased and the

tendency for inter-communal violence reduced as there appear to be a win-win situation.

This finding responds favourably to Francis *et al* (2011), in that when ethnic identities become hardened, relations between groups begin to suffer; at the same time, relationships within groups with a common identity may also start to fray. The forces that typically strengthen collective identity against other competing groups in the Niger Delta may give way to stronger influences; and within communities, for example, conflicts may arise along generational lines. Holders of traditional chieftaincies may use, or be assumed to be using their positions as a means of controlling compensation payments from oil companies; at times they viewed with suspicion by other community members, especially among the youth. Such intergenerational struggles fester inside communities when younger members repeatedly accuse local leaders of garnering land payments, social investments, or other forms of compensation for themselves rather than sharing them for the benefit of the community at large.

Setting and sponsoring of community vigilante group accounts for 12% while socio-political and economic mending of communities via supporting financially and boosting the formation of cluster development boards (CDBs) accounts for 15%. The community vigilante groups have been very helpful in dousing tension especially when people intentionally want to incite violence. The partnership of various community vigilantes that many MOCs have put in money into is playing some roles in restraining the resurgence of inter-communal violence. According to a key informant:

Where there is a cordial relationship among the community vigilante group, formation of CDBs becomes easy and communities who may not be hosting MOCs' facilities directly but are sharing in their disturbances are included in the CDBs. This inclusion guarantees their access to CSRs and acceptance of their neighbours from the actual host communities.

Bringing down the effect of impoverishment through conditional cash transfer takes up about 5% of the CSR intervention in the area of fighting against the resurgence of inter-communal violence in the region. While this appears to be a good solution, most of the key informants concluded that the cash transfers hardly ever get to the target recipients. This discovery suggests the need to increase investment in the areas that have the capacity to unite the communities, particularly the youths who are always at the middle of any violence in the region. Thus, the results tally with

Newsom (2011), in that the MOCs have positively influenced the curbing of resurgence of inter-communal violence; yet, more resources should be put into the area.

Analysis (Figure 3) indicates places the MOCs have made interventions in in the study area. While all can be considered relevant, some appear not to be as relevant as the investment the MOCs are making in them. MOCs investments are notable in the following areas: education (19%), Health services (10%), agriculture and rural farming about (6%), rural electrification (6%), housing and rural roads about (5%), fishing and sea foods (4%). In addition, others are: policy advocacy cum dialogue about (5%), and environmental control cum management about (11%). Just 2% went into tourism, then, the traditional industry (farming and fishing) which accounted for over 60% of the employment of the people got only about 10% of the intervention. This finding flows with Ekhatior and Iyiola-Omisore (2021), in that the result shows most of the intervention are urban based while the majority of the people that engage in violence are rural based.

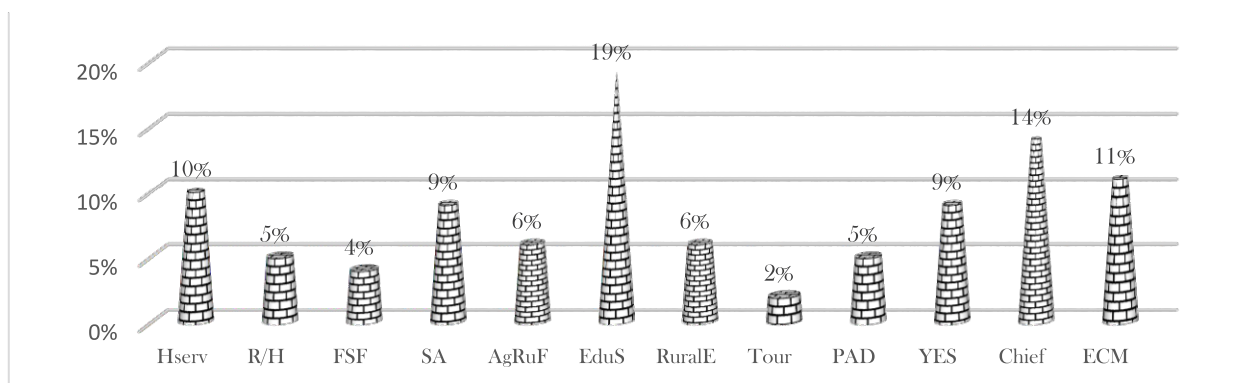


Figure 3. Percentage distributions of GMoUs intervention of MOCs by sectors in the Niger Delta².

Source: Computed from the field data by authors.

Chieftaincy matters got as much as 14% of the total intervention. To this, responses from a key informant stresses that:

Investment on the chiefs can be cut and invested into areas like the ECM and SA because most time, the funds that gets to the chiefs creates more troubles than bringing solution to violence. This often escalates the quest for community leadership which often spill into

² HServ = Health Services, ECM = Environmental Control and Management, Chief = Chieftaincy Title, YES = Youths Employment Scheme, PAD = Policy Advocacy and Dialogue, Tour = Tourism, RuralE = Rural Electrification, EduS = Educational Support, AgRuF = Agricultural and Rural Farming, SA = Skill Acquisition, FSF = Fishing and Sea Food Collection, R/H = Road and Housing.

inter-communal violence. Some of the chiefs actually fund the youth in violence with the fund they are getting from the chieftaincy matter.

This finding gives an affirmative reply to Newson (2011), in that the erosion of the legitimacy and effectiveness of chiefs is particularly challenging to the social order, since the settlement of disputes is one of the customary responsibilities of traditional leaders; and as the legitimacy and impartiality of traditional authorities are compromise, the ability of communities to resolve conflict in a non-violent way is further weakened. In this way, a growing sense of distrust has eroded the social capital of many Niger Delta communities and in some case has led to a complete breakdown of social order. *Nembe*, in Bayelsa State, is a community where disagreements over the sharing of compensation payments have led to violence in the past. Youths and vigilantes have held a paramount chief responsible for the economic and social crisis which has repeatedly afflicted other parts of their community, forcing him to live over one hundred miles away from his subjects (Okolo-Obasi *et al*, 2021). The findings suggest that because oil production can suffer from these violence outbreaks of inter-community conflict, MOCs have taken pains to make their CSR initiative more inclusive. Having understood that CSR programme to host communities is a way of ensuring their local 'social license to operate', they have directly borne the sometimes-substantial cost as a supplement to contractual payments on royalties and profits to the government. However, this practice of CSR initiatives can also be divisive and exclusionary, at times pitting communities against each other in a proliferation of micro-level struggles which undermine the basics for collective community actions. Today, CSR policies in the region seems to becoming more equitable with time and experience, but they are far from uniform projects. MOCs in the region are now extending their social investments to 'pipeline communities', as well as 'coastal communities' located near offshore platforms. A more recent approach known as the GMoU, clusters producing and non-producing communities of similar ethnic origin so that CSR – development goods can be shared equitably in order to bring down the resurgence of inter-community conflict over land and boundary disputes in the oil host communities. Based on these results, the findings advocate that thoughtful efforts made towards bettering the lives of the rural people will definitely alleviate the spread of return of inter-communal violence in Nigeria's Niger Delta region.

4.2 Econometric analysis

In this study, we projected the average variances in propensity scores of independent observable characteristics of both respondents of the CDB communities and the non-CDB communities.

Table 4. Comparison of mean score and observable characteristics across Treatment and Control of Driving Factors (N = 1200)

Score in percentage of maximum score	Treatment	Control	Difference
Score on reducing multi-dimensional poverty	31.31	21.43	9.88
Score on improving access to resources control and benefits	41.32	30.28	10.04
Score on access to farm input	21.37	13.18	8.19
Scores on reducing frustration and indignation	34.13	22.82	11.31
Scores on increased access to cultivatable land	27.92	15.17	12.75
Scores on access to fishing and sea food harvesting input	34.57	26.34	8.23
Scores on access enhanced alternative economic opportunities	42.53	36.65	5.88
Scores on access enhanced security due to vigilante group	36.72	29.31	7.41
Scores on access enhance relationship with neighbouring communities	31.65	22.82	8.83
Score on Economic capability of respondents	39.72	28.01	11.71
Observation	600	600	

Source: Computed from the field data by authors.

Analysis (Table 4) shows the dissimilarity in means scores which are significantly dissimilar at 5% significant level. The average treatment effect of the treatment is the difference of the mean score between the treatment group and that of the control group. The percentage difference in scores based on the factors encouraging inter-communal violence are shown (Table 4). The difference in score on bringing down multi-dimensional impoverishment between the treatment and non-control is just about 10%, score on bettering access to resources control and benefits has also a variance of about 10%. Score on access to farm input is about 8%; scores on lowering frustration and indignation about 11%; scores on improved access to cultivatable land about 13%; scores on access to fishing and sea food harvesting input about 8%, while that of enhanced access to alternative economic opportunities is about 6%. In addition, scores on access to better security due to vigilante group is about 7.41%; scores on access to improved relationship with neighbouring communities about 9% and, last but not the least, score on economic capability of respondents about 12%.

The positive variances in the result corresponds with Egbon *et al* (2018), in that the CSR intervention of the multinational oil companies using GMoU have had positive impact on combatting the factors that are encouraging inter-communal violence in the Niger Delta region. The implication is that increment on the CSR interventions targeted at these areas highlighted above will culminate into curtailing or eliminating the resurgence of inter-communal violence in

the region. We assessed the logit model to test the effect of CSR of MOCs using the GMoU on bettering access to cultivatable land and fishing spaces as well as bringing down multi-dimensional impoverishment to improve on rural communities' peaceful coexistence in the Niger Delta region. These according to PIND (2023a), are the key propelling factors behind the return of inter-communal violence in the communities of Nigeria's Niger Delta region.

4.3 Effects of MOCs' CSR investment using GMOU on improving access to cultivatable land and fishing spaces

Analysis (Table 5) indicates that the CSR investment of the MOCs has a noteworthy effect on bettering access to cultivatable land and fishing spaces. The finding proves that the MOCs may have invested poorly but, even at that, they still significantly clean the environment to free more lands for cultivation and fishing activities. We estimated a logistic regression analysis to forecast the effect of the CSR of MOCs using GMOU on bettering access to cultivatable land and fishing spaces using the variables in the equation below as the predictors.

$$\text{Logit (ALF)} = 2.213 + 1.125\text{GMOU} + .612\text{Age} + .028\text{Ms} + .135 \text{PriOcc} + .132\text{HHSize} + .076\text{Edu} + .162\text{AY} + .316\text{Busize} + (.129) \text{HHcom} + 0.17\text{Exp}$$

We carried out a test of the full model against a constant only model and it was statistically significant at 5%. This reveals that the predictors, as a set, unfailingly distinguished between the "Yes" and "No" effect of GMoU (chi square = 38.421, $p < .001$ with $df = 8$).

Table 5. Projected effects of multinational oil firms' CSR investment using GMOU on improving access to cultivatable land and fishing spaces in the Niger Delta region

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95.0% C.I. for EXP(B)	
		Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
Step 1(a)	Constant	2.213	.617	1.140	1	.064	3.331		
	PriOcc	.135	.221	.023	1	.456	1.017	.761	1.459
	HHcom	-.129	.321	.0313	1	.398	.562	.435	1.459
	GMOU	1.125	.016	7.172	1	.003	14.612	1.045	1.443
	AY	.162	.141	.715	1	.856	.908	.761	1.135
	HHSize	.132	.012	.492	1	.483	.986	.947	1.026
	Age	.612	.090	.205	1	.769	.983	.966	1.194

EXP	.017	.115	.171	1	.679	.962	.727	1.194
Busize	.316	.151	.171	1	.073	.954	.635	1.002
MS	.028	.153	.291	1	.038	1.930	.713	1.212
Edu	.076	.012	.652	1	.419	.954	.977	1.059

a Variable(s) entered on step 1: PriOcc, MS, Age, Edu, AY, HHCom, Busize, CSR, HHSize, EXP, YOMH.

Source: Computed from the field data by authors.

The Nagelkerke's R^2 of the output was .861, this shows a strong relationship between prediction and grouping. Also our prediction success overall was 86%. (90% for Yes and 82% for the No). The Z- value for GMoU is 7.172, with an associated p-value of .092. Thus, based on the set 5% significant level, we were able to come to the conclusion that CSRs of the MOCs using GMOU have made significant impact on *bettering access to cultivatable land and fishing spaces in the Niger Delta region*. Nonetheless, the EXP (B) value of the Predictor – GMoU is 14.612 indicating that bringing up the multinational oil companies' CSR intervention aimed at areas like bettering land cleaning and environmental management to expand cultivatable lands and fishing space, re-purchasing lands privatized by retired civil servants, ex-service men and politicians for communal usage just by one unit (equivalent of 1USD), the odds ratio is 14.612 times as large. Thus, those in the host communities will be about 15 times more likely to be empowered and busy to the point that they will not be willing to engage in inter-communal violence.

4.4 Effects of MOCs' CSR investment using GMOU on reducing multi-dimensional poverty to enhance rural communities' peaceful coexistence in Niger Delta region.

From the analysis of Table 6, where we projected the effects of MOCs' CSR interventions using GMoU on bringing down multi-dimensional impecuniousness in the Niger Delta region; the result reveals that GMoU has had noteworthy impacts on bringing down multi-dimensional poverty in the expanse of Niger Delta. The logistic regression result is tendered below in line with the general equation stated above.

$$\text{Logit (MP)} = 3.131 + 1.122\text{GMoU} + .034\text{Age} + (.137) \text{ PriOcc} + .321\text{HHSize} + .042 \text{ Edu} + (.064) \text{ AY} + (.224) \text{ HHcom} + .062\text{Busize} + .164\text{Exp} + 0.281\text{MS}$$

Table 6. Projected effects of MOCs' CSR investment using GMOU on reducing multi-dimensional poverty to enhance rural communities' peaceful coexistence in the Niger Delta region

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95.0% C.I. for EXP(B)
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		Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
Step 1(a)	AY	-.064	.114	.715	1	.398	.908	.727	1.135
	PriOcc	-.137	.212	.033	1	.856	.962	.635	1.459
	Busize	.062	.115	.171	1	.679	.954	.761	1.194
	HHcom	-.224	.312	.033	1	.456	.562	.435	1.459
	Age	.034	.009	3.205	1	.073	.983	.966	1.002
	Edu	.042	.021	.652	1	.419	1.017	.977	1.059
	MS	.281	.135	.291	1	.038	1.930	.713	1.212
	HHSIZE	.321	.021	.492	1	.483	.986	.947	1.026
	Exp	.164	.124	2.895	1	.029	1.810	.635	1.033
	GMOU	1.122	.061	5.624	1	.003	10.623	1.045	1.443
	Constant	3.131	.667	1.940	1	.164	5.131		

a Variable(s) entered on step 1: *PriOcc*, *MS*, *Age*, *Edu*, *AY*, *HHCom*, *Busize*, *CSR*, *HHSIZE*, *EXP*.

Source: Computed from the field data by authors.

The test of the full model against a constant only model we carried out was statistically significant. This indicates that the predictors as a set reliably differentiated between the “Yes” and “No” effect of GMOU (chi square = 37.240, $p < .001$ with $df = 8$). Nagelkerke's R^2 of .712 showed a strong relationship between prediction and grouping. Prediction success overall was 90%. (93% for Yes and 87% for the No). The Z- value for GMOU is 5.624, with an associated p-value of .072. Because our set significant level was 5%, the study made the conclusion that CSRs of the MOCs using GMOU have been helpful in the reduction of multi-dimensional impoverishment in the Niger Delta region. Also, the EXP (B) value of the Predictor – GMOU is 10.623, meaning that, if the MOCs bring up their CSR intervention aimed at lowering multi-dimensional impoverishment in the host communities by one unit (equivalent of 1USD), the odds ratio will be about 11 times as large. This means that the respondents are about 11 times more likely to be vested with economic power, thus, lifting many out of lack.

4.5 Effects of MOCs' CSR investment using GMOU on reducing frustration and indignation of the host and other neighboring communities.

We also carried out a logistic regression analysis to estimate the effect of the CSR of MOCs using GMOU on bringing down the frustration and resentment of the host and other neighbouring communities using the variables in equation below as the predictors.

Table 7. Projected effects of multinational oil firms' CSR investment using GMOU on reducing frustration and indignation of the host and other neighbouring communities in the Niger Delta region

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95.0% C.I. for EXP(B)	
		Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
Step	Constant	4.243	.674	2.420	1	.046	3.523		
1(a)	GMOU	1.214	.061	4.735	1	.003	6.742	1.045	1.443
	AY	.096	.114	.715	1	.398	.908	.727	1.135
	Edu	.063	.021	.652	1	.419	1.017	.977	1.059
	Age	.123	.009	3.205	1	.073	.983	.966	1.002
	HHSIZE	.241	.021	.492	1	.483	.986	.947	1.026
	Busize	-.324	.115	.171	1	.679	.954	.761	1.194
	PriOcc	.124	.212	.033	1	.856	.962	.635	1.459
	HHcom	-.321	.312	.033	1	.456	.562	.435	1.459
	EXP	.027	.115	.171	1	.679	.954	.761	1.194

a Variable(s) entered on step 1: CSR, MS, Age, Edu, PriOcc, AY, HHCom, Ychild, EXP, HHSIZE.

Source: Computed from the field data by authors.

Logit (FI) = 4.243 + 1.214GMOU + .123Age + .124PriOcc + . (219) HHSIZE + 063Edu +.096AY + + .028MS + (.321)HHcom + .324Busize + .027Exp

Analysis (Table 7) reveals that the CSR interventions of the MOCs has significantly influenced the reduction of frustration and exasperation of the host and other neighbouring communities of oil producing states. The outcomes point out that the MOCs intervention is meagre, yet, with significant impact in bringing down the frustration and indignation in Niger Delta region. Nevertheless, much efforts are still needed if inter-communal violence often prompted by frustration and indignation would be fully controlled.

Testing the full model against a constant only model was statistically substantial, showing that the predictors as a set unfailingly distinguished between the "Yes" and "No" effect of GMOU (chi square = 41.212, $p < .001$ with $df = 8$). Nagelkerke's R^2 of .714 revealed a strong relationship between prediction and grouping. Prediction success overall was 80%. (90% for Yes and 70% for the No). The Z- value for GMOU is 4.735, with an associated p-value of .082. On the basis of our set 5% significant level, the study came to the conclusion that CSRs of the MOCs using GMOU have had small but significant impact on bringing down the frustration and indignation of the host and other neighbouring communities in the Niger Delta. Likewise, the EXP (B) value of the Predictor – GMOU is 6.742, this entails that if the MOCs bring up their CSR intervention using GMOU aimed at lowering frustration and exasperation of the host and other neighbouring communities

in the Niger Delta by one unit, equivalent of 1USD, the odds ratio is about 6.7 times as large. As a result, the people are about 7 times more in the offing to be empowered and pulled out of frustration. This outcome is in agreement with Okoro (2019), in that such enablement will definitely refocus their minds on more essential things than partaking in inter communal violence.

Yet, the CSR interventions of the MOCs using the GMoUs in the Niger Delta region as it were is still in the low but have made positive impacts on bringing down the return of inter-communal violence in the oil-producing communities of Nigeria's Niger Delta. This is the foundation for the opinion of this study: if more interventions are effectively directed at this area by the MOCs and the leaders of various CDBs, a lot will improve. In other words, more cultivatable lands will be regained, fishing space will be extended, and many will be helped out of multi-dimensional impoverishment thereby bringing down frustration, resentment as well as aggression among both host cum neighbouring communities. This ultimately will prevent the return of inter-communal crisis to a sensible degree. The result assents to the frustration-aggression theory (Breuer and Elson, 2017), as it suggests to scholars and researchers of human nature that when they notice aggression they should be on the lookout for the possibility of the organism or group being confronted with frustration; and that when they perceive meddling with individual or group habits such as inter-communal violence, they should be suspicious of, among other things, aggression. In the case of the Niger Delta, the inter-communal violence is proposed to be caused by frustration in the environmental unfairness caused by oil extraction activities of MOCs, as local communities are prohibited from attainment of their goals and objectives in life. The outcome also consorts to Breuer and Elson (2017) and Walker and Pettigrew (1984), in that aggression is generally directed towards the cause of the frustration but where not possible, it may be displaced or targeted at others. Hence, the Niger Delta people have so long desired to enjoy the benefits of the oil deposit in their lands but regrettably what they get in return is gas flaring, pollution, and environmental wreckage caused by activities of oil companies. The finding also agrees with Kalama and Asanebi (2019), in that the frustration that arises from the insensitivity of the MOCs in the end turn the Niger Delta region into a complex functioning environment, ravaged by intra and inter-communal violence between the communities providing the oil and the oil companies, armed groups and oil companies as well as the Nigerian security forces. The finding clearly reveals that when people notice that they are being estranged, oppressed and prohibited from attaining a goal, their frustration will most likely force the region into experiencing aggression such as community and oil company conflict, intra-community violence, inter-community violence, inter-ethnic violence and such. In the same vein, relative deprivation as applied in the study is the experience of being disadvantaged or denied of something one sees

oneself as being entitled to. Within the context of this study, one can come to the conclusion that the activities and loose practices of MOCs in the region explains why the violence in the region intensified around 1995 – 2008. Thus, provoking the federal government of Nigeria under former president Umaru Musa Yar'Adua to issue the amnesty proclamation for the youths of Niger Delta who partake in armed struggle against the Nigeria state in June 2009.

However, in some of these communities in the region where trust and accountability have been degraded over time and inter-communal tensions are high effective dispute resolution hinges on the restoration of trusted processes and inclusion of a broad range of community stakeholders. Investing in trainings for leaders from all segments of society as independent mediators of inter-community disputes can help to accomplish this. In accordance with Uduji *et al* (2020), such trainings might draw lessons from Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanisms, which function similarly to the effective and inclusive Kabara Committees found in Nigeria. Facilitators of this trainings should focus on mediation strategies, communication dynamics, active listening techniques, cross-cultural competence, consensus building, and how to achieve impartial dispute settlements in oil region. Trained mediators would stand a better chance of ensuring trust, confidence, and productive communication between communities. Developing these skill sets in the context of inter-communal disputes in the oil-producing communities in Nigeria will foster peacebuilding and conflict resolution at both the inter-personal and community levels lowering polarization between local communities in the region. It may also curb disaffection among youths, vigilantes and other marginalized populations, relieving the perceived need to take justice into their own hands and reducing the potentials for violent altercations in the Niger Delta.

Generally, the result of this study suggest that the relative priorities of MOCs' CSR involvements in the Niger Delta should be dissimilar to the classic, American ordering, as proposed by Carroll (1991). Placing significance on a cultural context in the determination of suitable CSR priorities and programmes, as suggested by Visser (2006), is essential in the context of the Niger Delta. There is the need for flexibility too, as suggested by Amaeshi *et al* (2006), in addressing the distinctiveness of the socio-economic problems in the region, which involves alleviating the rise of inter-communal violence. Muthuri (2012), also agreed in that it is vital for CSR interventions in Africa to include bringing down of impoverishment, education and training. But in addition and input, if we are to have our say in line with CSR interventions alleviating the resurgence of inter-communal violence in the oil-producing communities of Nigeria, we would reason that MOCs' CSR can play a vital role in bringing down the return of inter-communal violence when investment in land and boundary disputes is fashioned for cleaning the environmental wreckages in other to

make more lands available for cultivation and fishing spaces. It is our argument that the private sector, generally, is in a good position to address some of the logistical and cultural problems that face the traditional source of employments, and limit the ability of local people to have access to capacity building programmes. Aside that, they are also designed to equip them with relevant skills necessary for peaceful engagement and, through that, compliment government's efforts in the planning and carrying out of peace building agenda for their individual communities. MOCs, specifically, are well positioned for the transfer of useful business practices cum standards, technologies and infrastructure that expedite policy dialogues in addition to promoting peace building in the region. Thus, taking up measures that counter the return of inter-communal violence should be prioritized in CSR practices in the Niger Delta because it will helpful in improving the environment for business purposes in the region.

5. Concluding remarks, caveats and future research directions

A return of inter-communal violence over land and boundary disagreement in the Niger Delta remains recurrent with periodic incidents of violence, which could worsen communal and ethnic hostilities (PIND, 2023a). According to PIND (2023b), the incidents have prompted a sequence of reprisal violence and killings in the oil-producing communities; with an intensification of communal tensions and ethnic hostilities which have unfavorably affected the dynamics of conflict and insecurity in the expanse. The incidents and loss of life involved are causing extensive social, economic, political, humanitarian, and security consequences in the Niger Delta expanse of Nigeria (PIND, 2023c). Given how predominant the return of inter-communal violence and insecurity have become in the region, as well as the risk of sustainable peace and advancement, we hypothesize that MOCs have failed in carrying out a substantial GMoU interventions in oil-producing communities of Nigeria's Niger Delta; and that GMoU of MOCs has failed to significantly impact on lowering the resurgence of inter-communal violence in the oil-producing communities of Nigeria's Niger Delta.

Thus, we went into action to find out if CSR of MOCs using GMoU has made any significant impact on curbing the resurgence of inter-communal violence in Niger Delta, Nigeria. Using explanatory research design, the study embraced mixed methods in answering the research questions and testing the hypotheses of the study. Primary data were derived from a sample of 1200 respondents chosen from all the nine states of the region using multiple sampling techniques. We made use of both the structured questionnaire and key informant interview to determine the effect of CSR on the resurgence of inter-communal violence in the region. Findings from the use of a logit model and use of propensity score matching to decide the mean variance between variables in the treatment and control reveal that a bantam but noteworthy CSR interventions have been made by the MOCs in the areas that will dampen people's mind in agreeing to engage in inter-communal violence. The outcomes suggest that an upsurge in CSR targeted at bettering access to cultivatable land, improving fishing space, reducing multi-dimensional paucity, as well as lowering frustration and indignation, will deter local people from participation in inter-communal violence.

In terms of implications, it is obvious from the results that when people observe that they are isolated, oppressed and prohibited from actualizing a goal, their frustration will probably turn into aggression like the case of inter-communal violence in Nigeria's Niger Delta. In the same way, relative deprivation as applied in this study is the experience of being deprived or denied of something to which one thinks one is entitled to have. The main constraint of this study, however, is that it targeted only on the oil-producing communities in Nigeria. Hence, the results cannot be

easily applied on other emerging economies with the same policy problems. In the light of this shortcoming, replicating the analysis in other developing countries is worthwhile in order to examine whether the established nexuses withstand empirical scrutiny in different context of global regions.

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The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

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