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Email: wajghana2080@gmail.com

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CRUDE OIL AND THE SOCIAL LIFE OF THE NIGER DELTA PEOPLE.

**¹Keke, Reginald Chikere, PhD
Admiralty University of Nigeria, Delta State, Nigeria,**

**²Gold, Sunday Chukwuemeka PhD
Edwin Clark University, Delta State, Nigeria**

**³Ndubuisi, Okorafor Johnson,
Novena University, Ogume, Delta State, Nigeria**

Abstract

This study examines the impacts of the crude oil on the lives and livelihood of the Niger Delta people of Nigeria. The region is Africa's largest crude oil producer, eighth in the world and sixth-largest gas reserve on the planet. The despicable effects of the oil industry activities in the Niger Delta is a chief cause of apprehension to the people as their lives and livelihoods are disappearing by the minutes with very little or no dedicated plan to ameliorate their sufferings. This makes the Niger Delta one of the poorest deltas on earth and the most tortuous, tormented and turbulent region in Nigeria. This work scrutinizes current penury of oil activities and the recurrent half-spirited mitigating measures with the aim of proffering workable solutions to enhance the contributions of the oil sector to sustainable development and better environmental stewardship in the region. Historical and qualitative data used, revealed that the environment, health and livelihood of the people are negatively impacted by oil spills and gas flares; that the oil industry employs very few youths resulting in restiveness, kidnapping, pipeline vandalism, oil bunkering and criminality. Furthermore, the poverty, environmental degradation, lack of access to clean water, decline in income, rural landlessness, food insecurity, conflicts and deaths experienced in the Niger Delta are largely attributed to oil activities which is supposed to be a blessing. This has internationalized the crisis in oil-producing communities and contributed to volatility in oil prices internationally. Conclusively, this work further revealed that since these challenges are man-made, they are equally surmountable, if government regulations and multi-national companies' policies concerning oil-producing and importing are reviewed in line with international best practices. Based on the above findings, it is recommended that proactive measures such as the provision of state-of-the-arts technological solutions, genuine community engagement and partnership-building by all stake-holders in the oil sector, international development assistance and principally the political will by the Nigerian State to ensure proper resource governance for the common good will end agitations and thereby giving way to genuine development in the Niger Delta.

Key Words: crude oil, lives, livelihood, political will, development.

Introduction

The Niger Delta is one of the largest wetlands on earth and the first in Africa. It is 20,000 square kilometers of which 6000 square kilometers is mangrove swamps and forest. Hydro carbon exploration and exploitation has wreaked havoc on the Niger Delta region and its people. Though in official parlance the area comprises nine states, which includes Abia, Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Edo, Imo and Ondo, however, in the notion of the South-South geopolitical zone, the Niger Delta is made up of three core states of Delta State, Rivers State and Bayelsa State.¹ Anambra State is being considered of late to belong to the Niger Delta region. The region hosts about 25% of Nigeria's population approximately 31 million people, 40 ethnic groups, and 185 Local Governments Councils settled in about 13,000 small communities with about 250 languages. The delta of the Niger River covers a land area of approximately 75,000 km², making up 12% of Nigeria's landmass. There are around 600 oil fields producing from around 5,000 wells, and although production is focused in limited areas, the region is crisscrossed by approximately 10,000 km of pipelines.²

The Niger Delta region is not the only oil-gas rich region in Africa but can be described as probably the most shameful for oil production and oil company-related problems in oil mining areas in Africa because most of the negative reports on oil and gas industry activities are fixated on the Niger Delta.³ The marginalization and neglect of the region is historical predating independent Nigeria and the Niger Delta people never took this lying low and according to Ogwu ⁴ with many benefits derived by the Nigerian state from the Niger Delta. It is surprising that the oil-rich region suffers neglect from the direct impact of exploration and exploitation of crude oil resulting in the loss of lives, death of flora and fauna, unemployment, and drawbacks in socio-economic and infrastructural development. Imasuen and Omorogieva, opined that crude oil is a major environmental pollutant with spills resulting in environmental degradation, soil depletion, water contamination, pollution of farm lands, atmosphere and aquatic lives.⁵ These adversely affect the

inhabitants and habitat in the Niger Delta. Human Rights Watch pointedly decried the long-term effects of oil-led development and hydrocarbon pollution on the Delta which has resulted to serious damages on the environment and livelihood of the majority of the inhabitants in the oil producing communities.⁶

The Niger Delta people depend on the soil and rivers for agriculture and fishing as means of their livelihood, and destruction of land and drinking water supplies translates to poverty and hunger which has increased with the discovery of oil in 1956. While examining the political economy of natural resource struggles in the Niger Delta and its negative effects on the people Omoweh argued that:

the crisis is political in nature and that, it stems from the resources rights struggles engendered by the states' undemocratic governance of natural resources not least land and oil and gas ... suggest the need to democratize the governance of natural resources as a potent alternative strategy to help actualize the resource rights of the people; mitigate the bloody resource conflicts; reverse the underdevelopment of the Niger Delta and enthronedemocracy and development in Nigeria.⁷

The improper resource governance in Nigeria is the bane of the crisis and agitations in the Niger Delta affecting the lives and livelihood of the people. Abolition of the Land Use Act, 2004 and the practice of true federalism will better the lot of the Niger Delta people and bring people-centred and participatory development in the area. Deep at the heart of the poverty and crisis in the region is the total failure of equity, justice and fairness by the oil actors to improve the wellbeing of the people.

The work problematizes the origin of neglect and marginalization of the region, the effects of crude oil on the lives and livelihood of the Niger Delta people and the way forward for a more viable and sustainable deltaic environment for habitation. The work lays emphasis on the historical foundations of what has now become the Niger Delta question as a creation of insistent government neglect and marginalization of the area for

over five decades. The lack of corporate social responsibility by transnational oil companies operating in the Niger Delta and acute paucity of social amenities have negatively impacted the lives and livelihood of the people. This has made the region insecure and underdeveloped in an ocean of plenty.

History of Neglect and Marginalization

By 1900, the kings in the Niger Delta city-states have all been deposed and banished from their states for either shipping oil directly to Liverpool, monopolizing trade in palm oil, refusing foreign encroachment and trade monopoly into their states or false accusations of perpetrating the slave trade. Those affected included:- king Jaja of Opobo, Nana of Itsekiri, King Obi Ossai of Aboh, King Ibanichuka of Okrika, and King Fredrick Koko of Nembe. In 1914, Nigeria a British creation came into existence with the Niger Delta finding itself as a minority among the ethnic majors of the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo. Found within the Eastern Regional Government dominated by the Igbo, it was alleged by their spokespersons that they were segregated upon in terms of political appointments. For instance, as at 1957 an Igbo man was the chairman of Port Harcourt Town Council⁸ with most of the developments in the region concentrated in the capital which was Enugu.

In 1947, Chief Dappa Biriye and his Niger Delta colleagues founded the Niger Delta Congress (NDC) essentially to attract the attention of the world to the plight of the people in the region pertaining to the political and economic marginalization by the ethnic majors in Nigeria. The outcome of this protest was the creation of Rivers Province in 1948.

In June 1956 crude oil was struck in Oloibiri in commercial quantity and the Niger Delta peoples started facing far worst challenges that compounded those already faced from the peculiar nature of their environment which is mangrove swamps, innumerable creeks and rivers.⁹ The environment therefore posed considerable developmental challenges explaining in part the reasons for the dire deficiency of infrastructure such as road networks, portable pipe-borne water, hospitals, adequate water transportation facilities, and real economic development. Irrespective of these challenges, the

abandonment and relegation of the people never resulted in hostile or violent relations against the Federal or Regional governments as through dialogues, exchange of ideas, ideals and values the people pursued to address their dilemma by peaceful and legal means. In 1956, at the eve of Nigeria's independence Sir Willink Commission was set up to look into the 'fears of minorities' whether well or ill founded with the aim of alleviating them. The commission did not accept the creation of a separate state rather; its recommendations were incorporated into the constituent document of the Niger Delta Development Board as a 'special area'.¹⁰ As the exploitation of crude oil in the Niger Delta intensified, in 1966, there was a twelve days arms insurrection led by Isaac Adaka Boro against the neglect and marginalization of the Niger Delta and the need for the region to control their resources. The rebellion was crushed by the FG because the rebellion was probably premature and the people had not been sufficiently sensitized. Before 1970, the people started facing deforestation of the area, environmental degradation following first oils spills in Bomu in Ogoni land of 1970, gas flaring and excess heating of the environment, and low productivity in the food supply.

From 1970-1990, the Niger Delta peoples, sought to find solutions to the environmental degradation, poverty, and hunger caused by transnational oil companies explorations through negotiations and pacific settlement with the oil companies by compensations even though they were miserable and inadequate. However, each time parleys failed the Niger Delta people in the interest of peace, security and equity resorted to legal channels through the courts, whose verdicts always went in favor of the oil companies and the Government. By the 1990s, the deleterious effects of environmental degradation became more apparent with excruciating devastation on the delicate environment coupled with lack of social amenities. These were now compounded by environmental pollution threatening their lives, means of livelihood, with farmlands, fishponds, rivers and streams desolate owing to pollution from oil leaks, ineffective maintenance culture, old and overused oil infrastructures and accidental discharges.

Confronted with grave threats to their lives and livelihood and having suffered neglect for over two decades

with vicious lack of corporate social responsibility and intervention by government to alleviate their sufferings, the once peaceful Niger Delta peoples resorted to successive protests first against oil companies in the late 1980s. These companies instead of engaging the people to think-tank on how to alleviate their sufferings and giving a human face to the plight of their hosts, sought protection from the Federal Government (FG) to combat the peaceful protesting Niger Delta people. The FG often immediately mobilize the national security agencies (Paramilitary Mobile Police and Army) code-named Operation Flush in Rivers State and Operation Salvage in Bayelsa State, to brutally clamp down on the people, beating, detaining, killing, shooting, arresting and injuring men, women, children and youths protesters. This made the FG and the Oil companies and the host communities to be 'stake holders at war'.¹¹ These marked the beginning a turbulent relationship between the Federal Government and the host oil communities which transformed into emergent civil disturbances and confrontational relationship. The 1980s saw the host communities better structured ethnically with Charters, bill of rights, declarations, accords and conferences held by these ethnic group aimed at saving their lives and environment. The period saw a remarkable increase in youth participation and leadership in the struggle, it became more visible and louder having recognized the unholy alliance and coalition between the federal government and the transnational oil companies to extinct their ethnic group due to their 'minority status' in a distorted Nigerian Federation. The Niger Delta people in their great desires for environmental justice, developmental aspirations to protect their lives and livelihood started demanding adequate compensation and total control of their resources. Being a minority, the Niger Delta is rich in oil wealth but was politically disadvantaged and toothless in the agitation to control their lives and livelihood in a decent manner.

In the 1990s, having been pushed to the wall, the agitations ballooned into requests for increase in the percentage allotted to the derivation principle, strict adherence to the

practice of fiscal federalism, revenue allocation formulae and the political restructuring of the Nigerian State.¹² These demands brought them in unswerving confrontation with the Federal Government, starting with the Umechem tragedy in Etche and the Ogoni uprising, both in Rivers State. The military repressive response to the conflicts in the 1990s radicalized their demands for self-determination. Ethnic nationalities in the Niger Delta made declarations that are tantamount to issuance of a bill of rights and charter of demands such as, the Ogoni Bill of Rights (1999), the Kaiyama Declaration (1998), Oron Bill of Rights (1999), Orhobo Economic Summit (1998), Ikwerre Rescue Charter (1998), Warri Accord (1999), and Niger Delta Peoples Compact (2008). These protesting groups, communities and ethnic nationalities demanded for the control of their resource and for the development of the region to better their lives and livelihood. The outcome of the above is that in the 1990s violence became the main tool by the people to drive home their grievances following unrelenting military violence and repression. The militarization of the Niger Delta region started during this period and the Niger Delta was never to remain the same again.

By 1995, when the first phase of violent uprisings had been forcefully crushed, the people resorted to other more subterranean strategies to achieve their aim. The incidence of kidnapping of oil workers, sabotage of oil wells, and pipeline vandalism became the custom. The youths sought to make the region insecure for oil workers and oil companies to operate, a stratagem which succeeded in keeping Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) out of Ogoni land since 1993 to-date.

There are five identifiable stages of agitations in the Niger Delta. Firstly between 1885 –1956 the incorporation of the Niger Delta states under colonial rule and the attendant resistance of the people in the form of petitions to the British Colonial Administration for the creation of independent administrative political units that would enable them tackle their peculiar environmental challenges and not to be subsumed in any political schedules dominated by other groups within Nigeria. The Willink Commission noted in 1956 that,

there is no other area in the whole of West Africa with a physical configuration like that of the Rivers area.

It was unfair that such an area should not have its own separate government to harness the energies of the rivers and develop its unique resources in the interest of the people who lived there. The Rivers Chiefs and Peoples Conference in the 1950s upheld the aim of actualizing this dream.

The second period between 1956-1980 saw petitions and law suits to restore the harmful consequences of crude oil exploration and exploitation. The petitions sought compensations from the oil companies for the acquisition of their land, but the 1978 Land Use Act vested all lands to the Federal Government thereby making the oil companies reluctant to pay compensation though litigations in the courts increased with no tangible result. Third phase was 1980-1990, which was marked by mass protests, rallies, and demonstrations against oil multinationals by host communities with relative non-violent protests through boycotts, obstruction of oil workers from having access to their installations and offices within the territory of the protesting community. More often than not, negotiated settlements and promises by the oil companies to address their demands were reached but never implemented in all honesty.

Fourthly, 1990 -1998 saw well organized agitations with youths bringing their intellect to bear on the rallies with ethnic coloration. Coalitions between the oil bearing communities and civil society environmental rights groups were forged to present a united front against the government and the oil companies. At this point the protest and agitations received international recognition and confronted by massive government repression and crack down in the Niger Delta. The environmental and human rights problems during the period culminated in the death of author and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa in 1995. This brought Nigeria (the Abacha regime) and the international oil companies (SHELL) in the region to international disrepute as Nigeria was suspended from the Common Wealth of Nations and corresponding economic sanctions imposed on Nigeria by the international community. By

1998 at the eve of the new democratic dispensation there arose wide spread insurgency in Niger Delta against the Federal Government marked by outright confrontation and armed resistance against the military and transnational oil companies. This era saw the emergence of local militia groups in the region; like the Egbesu war boys and Asari Dokubo's Niger Delta People Volunteer Force (NDPVF), Icelanders, Greenlanders, Martyrs Brigade, Outlaws, Bush Boys, De Bam among others all operating under the umbrella of the Joint Revolutionary Council (JRC).

In 1999, Nigeria returned to democracy ushering in the fifth phase of agitation from 2000-2007. During this phase, agitations turned from violent protest, militancy to criminality. In no period in the history of agitations in the Niger Delta had the oil companies, the Federal Government and the international community been visibly threatened like during this period, 2000-2007. In January 2006, four SHELL expatriate staff was kidnapped in Bayelsa from a flow station. In Rivers and Bayelsa States, kidnapping of oil company workers for ransom was rife and many oil companies shut down and relocated to Lagos. During this period illegal oil bunkering flourished, Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) led by Henry Okah, launched fierce attacks on oil installations and daily oil output fell from 1.5 million barrel per day to 500,000 bpd from 2006-2007 and the Joint Task Force (JTF) headquarters was relocated from Warri to Bayelsa to contain militancy from agitating groups like the NDPVF, MEND, Niger Delta Vigilante (NDV), led by Ateke Tom, De Gbam, Icelanders and leaders like Government Epemupolo (Tom Polo), Boy Loaf and others. Hostage taking of oil workers, SPDC declaration of *force majeure* and inability to supply oil to the international clients, bursting of oil pipes to siphon crude, impacted negatively on oil supply in the global market. These incidences prompted the Yar'Adua Administration to grant Amnesty to all warring groups and criminals in the region on the 4th October, 2009. This programme saw most of the militant groups surrendering their arms to the Government and the Government in return agreed to sponsor them in skills acquisition and university education within and outside Nigeria with monthly stipends attached. Since the Amnesty Programme in 2009,

the Niger Delta has been relatively peaceful, but the agitations have not stopped as the lives and livelihood of the people are still impacted negatively. The people had expected that more should have been done to address the root cause of agitation, poverty and underdevelopment in the Niger Delta in a regional scope and not just rehabilitating and re-integrating a few.

Impact of on the lives and livelihoods of the Niger Delta people.

The oil companies operating in Nigeria have argued that their activities are conducted to the highest environmental standards and that the impact of oil on the environment of the delta is minimal. Shell has stated that 'Shell Nigeria believes that most of the environmental problems are not the result of oil operations'¹³ Ken Saro Wiwa, maintained that the environment of Ogoni and by extension the Niger Delta has been 'completely devastated by three decades of reckless oil exploration or ecological warfare by Shell...an ecological warfare is highly lethal, more so it is unconventional. It is omnicidal in effect. Human life, flora, fauna, the air fall at its feet and

finally the land itself dies'.¹⁴ In the Niger Delta, the oil industry activities by omission or commission have caused environmental degradation and health hazard in terms of diseases due to oil spills and gas flaring leading to the collapse of local fishing and farming, the loss of habitat and biodiversity, acid rain damage and health impacts of air, noise and light pollution.¹⁵ Riverine downstream communities and neighboring states which depend on the migratory fish from the Niger Delta suffer lack because of the erosion of aquatic and marine lives and economic trees. The Niger Delta Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration Project (the 'Niger Delta scoping report'), a team of experts from Nigeria, the United Kingdom and the United States convened by the Nigerian Conservation Foundation concluded that:

The damage from oil and gas operations is chronic and cumulative, and has acted synergistically with other sources of environmental stress to result in a severely impaired coastal ecosystem and compromised livelihoods and health of the region's impoverished residents.¹⁶

Oil spilled in the Niger Delta triggered by accidents, waste dumping, and bombings during the Biafra war, equipment malfunction, sabotage, small-scale theft for local refining and illegal bunkering in the burgeoning oil industry is estimated at 100,000 barrels per day.¹⁷ Report estimates that between 9 and 13million barrels of oil have been spilled in the last 50 years, 'representing about 50 times the estimated volume spilled in the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill in Alaska in 1989'.¹⁸

Oil spills and industry activities pose direct risks to the environment and human health while also undermining fishing and farming livelihoods. Gas flaring, is particularly problematic and a common practice in the Niger Delta contributing dangerously to greenhouse gas emissions, with negative impacts on the health and livelihoods of local communities. Gases flaring in the Niger Delta ranges from 20% to 76% compared with a worldwide average of 4.8%. Many communities have reported illnesses like gastrointestinal problems, skin diseases, cancers and respiratory ailments especially in Rivers and Bayelsa States. In River State there is the constant pollution of the environment by soot caused by the incomplete combustion of petroleum products. This soot has been responsible for heart and lung diseases without air quality indexes in the region.

Oil companies cause conflicts and social unrest in host communities who vent their anger concerning limited employment opportunities of the people in the oil industry. Inequitable sharing of oil revenues and Oil Corporation's penchant to engage with local communities through their chiefs and local leaders, who often do not remit to the people money given to the communities by the companies, caused inter-community conflicts between communities participating in such projects and those that do not in the Niger Delta. Rivalry amongst youth leaders about sharing of money from the oil companies is a major source of conflict in the region resulting in widespread poverty.

International oil companies invest large amounts of money in community development projects which are expected to be sustainable with local community's partnerships to end poverty, without ignoring the underlying development challenges. Most of these

development projects have very short life spans and not sustainable in the long run and barely make any meaningful impact in the lives of the people. The above, in the end result in the inability of the oil companies to fulfill their CSR obligations to the host communities given that these projects do not meet up with requisite sustainable lives and livelihood. Community projects, issues of decision making and negotiations with the government should take into strict priority the most pressing and longtime needs of communities.

The environmental and human rights problems relating to protests in the early 1990s culminated in the death of author and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and other Ogoni people in 1995, and brought Nigeria and the international oil companies especially (SHELL) that operates in the region into international disrepute. Since Nigeria's return to democracy in 1999, the situation in its oil-producing region of the Niger Delta has degenerated from social protest into violent protest, militancy and criminality. This has made the region very volatile and insecure for any meaningful development. It is important to note that there are many layers of interest in the Niger Delta, making it difficult to find objective efforts to diagnose or treat problems arising from oil companies activities. In addition to the interplay of ethnic identity, land tenure issues and competition for resources at the community level, there are also bigger forces at play such as those involved in large-scale illegal oil 'bunkering' (theft), which is a multi-million dollar industry in which the Nigeria state security forces and staff of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) have been fingered as collaborators with suspicious international actors involved in the region.

Water pollution (ground and surface water), results in water scarcity, declined fisheries, high cost of providing water in urban areas and poor domestic hygiene and total lack of portable water for the Niger Delta people. These cause diseases even deaths. Lack of water retards the growth of vegetation and crops resulting to over dryness. Wild bush fires further complicate the vegetation and environmental problems of the region.

The issue of monetary compensation by companies to communities have taken a dangerous dimension in the Niger Delta as it has come to dominate the oil spills discourse to the extent that clean-up, reclamation and remediation have become less of a priority than

establishing who is responsible for the spill, and how compensation could be maximized. There is in some cases perverse incentives created by the inordinate love for monetary compensation whereby some fishermen, farmers and communities find it more lucrative to allow oil spills to endure for days and weeks before reporting to the authorities, with the intention to make more money from compensation claims than from their primary economic activities. This dangerous practice is not sustainable to the lives and livelihood of the present and future generations. Similarly, local contractors employed for the clean-up process and unemployed youths stand to benefit financially from oil spills. The consequence of this is the general lack of development and employment opportunities in the Niger Delta with direct negative impact on the environment. Scientists have observed that an offshore gas flare in the Niger Delta is visible from space and has remained problematic. Furthermore, the ‘open pipe flare’ method in Nigeria, which is adjudged almost obsolete in other climes outside the country, aggravates the problem. As Clarke, opines, ‘Many flares have run 24 hours a day and some have been active for 40 years with over 8 million cubic feet per day (MMCFD) burnt’.¹⁹

Emissions from gas flaring include dangerous substances like: carbon dioxide, methane, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxides, carcinogenic substances such as benz[a]pyrene and dioxin, and unburned fuel components, including benzene, toluene, xylene, and hydrogen sulphide.²⁰ Gas flared in Nigeria is unclear, with estimates ranging from 20% (according to the Nigerian Department of Petroleum Resources) to 76% (according to UNDP) of produced associated gas, compared with a worldwide average of 4.8%.²¹ This practice is not in line with best practices and must stop because Nigerian lives and livelihoods matter.

A 2001 scientific study of the adverse health effects of gas flaring in Canada lists various cancers, respiratory disease, heart disease, rheumatic disorders and eye problems.²² EJP/ERA²³ has warned that gas flaring in Nigeria can cause leukemia among populations living close to the flares, citing supporting evidence from the US Environmental Protection Agency. They estimate that around 35,000 people live within a 1.3 km radius and 330,000

people within a 5 km radius of a flow station. Another study carried out in southeastern Nigeria showed evidence of acid rain due to gas flaring, which can contaminate water bodies and the soil.²⁴ The NGOs such as Climate Justice Programme and Environmental Rights Action claim that ‘the flares have contributed more greenhouse gases than all of sub-Saharan Africa combined’.²⁵

In Nigeria, efforts to address gas flaring is hampered by a lack of political will and disagreements about who should shoulder the financial cost of infrastructural upgrade and harnessing the gas which will improve the lives and livelihood of the people through the use of domestic gas and saving income for the people to invest in other areas.

Oil companies have been responsible for the rising conflicts and social unrest in their areas of operation, environmental degradation and threats to local farming and fishing livelihoods.²⁶ Chevron Texaco is estimated to have lost around \$750 million as a result of community strife.²⁷ Oil corporation development projects have been a singular cause of inter-community conflicts in the delta between communities participating in such projects and those that do not. Such tensions are thought to have contributed to the Nembe war in 2005 and the conflict between the Emuoha and Ogbakiri communities in Rivers State. In 2004, Emmanuel Etomi, Shell's community development manager in Nigeria acknowledged that the company at times fed ‘conflict by the way we award contracts, gain access to land, and deal with community representatives’²⁸ although cash payments to community leaders to avoid disruption, or to local (usually armed) individuals for security. This practice nurture conflict and crime, the increase in hostage taking of both foreign oil workers and more recently of prominent Nigerians and their family members.

The level of unemployment in the gas-surplus Niger Delta is high irrespective of the oil potentials and wealth. Employment potentials of the local communities owing to shortages in technical skills and training mostly provided by companies remain small. This makes the people poor and lack income to meet their needs. In Nigeria in April 2010, the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Local Content Bill was signed into law. It places obligations on international and local oil companies to actively engage in capacity-building and use of

Nigerian services and personnel. This was intended to bring more jobs and employment to the people so as to alleviate poverty but this local content bill is yet to achieve its purpose.

The Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) was established in 2000 to carry out development projects in the region and end poverty as the oil companies must contribute 3% of their annual operating budget to the Commission. There is broad consensus that despite a budget of billions of naira, the NDDC has not to date fulfilled its mandate with hundreds of abandoned projects that have no impact on the lives and livelihood of the people, not even with the recent establishment of Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs to improve on the wellbeing of the Niger Delta people. Oil theft (or oil bunkering) in Nigeria, has ranged from 20,000 to 300,000 barrels per day by the federal government. This oil bunkering happens on different scales from small-to medium scale crude theft for local refining and use. This method of theft involves boring holes in the thousands of miles of pipelines that crisscross the delta and inserting valves – a highly risky practice that often results in explosions and death of people. Large-scale oil bunkering is a highly profitable business (or form of organized crime), in which crude is also stolen directly from the wellhead and mixed with legitimate oil or refined regionally en route to international markets. The small-scale stolen oil is crudely refined resulting in significant environmental pollution which impacts negatively the health of the people and breeding a sense of injustice in the Delta area.²⁹

Recommendations and Way forward

While oil companies are implementing certain measures to address the negative impacts of their activities in the Niger Delta, corporate social responsibility activities largely remain piecemeal and short-term, community engagement is inadequate and requirements for accountability and transparency are either insufficient or not enforced. Company must stand up to keep agreements entered with host communities and community development projects must have positive long term impact on the lives and livelihood of the people.

In oil-producing countries, the main challenges relate to the lack of political will and capacity to implement and enforce national regulations, highlighting underlying governance challenges that need to be addressed. The government should stop playing politics with oil communities and implement a holistic development of the region, end the gas flaring, implement resource control policies and increased revenue derivation for the development of the region.

The European Union (EU), as a major importer of oil from Sub-Saharan Africa and host of international oil companies, must take the responsibility and the opportunity to promote greater sustainability and equity in the oil sector, in particular through engagement with governments and oil companies to make sure they develop the regions they work in, especially the Niger Delta. The EU members should promote greater revenue transparency, restrict and refuse to buy

illegal oil in the international market. This will reduce illegal oil sales from bunkering, pipeline vandalism or Gbo fire (illegal artisanal refining) in the region which cause the spills that affect the lives and livelihood of the people in the negative.

There must be concerted cooperation and coordination to mitigate negative impacts of oil industry activity among all stakeholders: Governments, oil companies, civil society and communities in dealing with the oil spills problem, as it requires that facilities be upgraded, compensation of affected communities, reclamation and remediation of affected communities. Financial transparency in oil revenues will make it easy to hold governments to account and communities to fully understand the potential economic benefits of the sector for national economies and what is reserved for the development of the communities. This will bring peace and security for development to thrive in the region.

Then oil companies and government must provide constant power in the Niger Delta to help the growth of small and medium scale enterprises. It is estimated that successful local gas-to-power projects, in the Niger Delta will save 30% of income of the people to invest in other areas. This will end gas flares and significantly change communities' perceptions

of oil companies and government and improve their operating environment – as the flares are such visible negative markers of the incidence of oil companies.

Conclusion.

The Nigeria state must be accountable, responsive and transparent and promote people-centered development by actualizing the resource rights of the Niger Delta people. This will positively impact on the lives and livelihood of the people. There must be the democratization of resource, governance by repealing of the Land Acts, 2004, Mineral Mining Act, 2004, Petroleum Act, 2004, and the Oil Pipelines Act, 1990 and create institutions that will enable stake holders in the oil sector to develop the region in particular, and Nigeria at large according to international best practices.

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Email: wajghana2080@gmail.com

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**CORPORATE RESILIENCE AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS OF
SELECTED HOSPITALITY FIRMS IN RIVERS STATE**

EGBULE A. C. SOLOMON (Ph.D.)

Department of Business Administration and Management

Faculty of Management Science

Michael and Cecilia University Agbara-Otor, Delta State

&

ALIKU IFEANYI HAROLD

Department of Marketing and Entrepreneurship,

Faculty of Management Sciences Delta State University Abraka

ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between corporate resilience and entrepreneurial success of hospitality firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. Cross sectional research design was adopted in studying eight (8) of these firms reported. Managerial employees are reported to have constituted the population of the study. From the field survey, sixty-eight (68) copies of the questionnaire were analyzed; Structural Equation Modeling as a statistical tool from AMOS version 20.0 was used to determine the relationship existing between the variables while the beta-values obtained were used to test hypotheses formulated for the study. Findings revealed the existence of a significant relationship between the dimensions of corporate resilience namely; robustness and agility and entrepreneurial success. It was then concluded that practices directed at boosting resilience significantly contribute to the success of entrepreneurial activities for firms studied. This gave rise to our recommendations for the firms and other business organizations in an environment beclouded with unprecedented changes to adopt managerial practices that will contribute to encouraging individual workers towards entrepreneurship for organization wide success.

Keywords: Robustness, Agility, Entrepreneurial Success, Corporate Resilience, Sustainable Growth

1. Introduction

Hyper competition, uncertainty, and ambiguity characterize the corporate environment of today. Due to the quickly shifting nature of the business world, businesses are under more pressure than ever before from external environmental forces. Business managers must contend with the competition's daily escalation. As a result, the importance of "resilience" for all companies was magnified by all the changes in the external environment. Today's enterprises want to be resilient so they can quickly adjust to changing circumstances and move forward. Resilient people and organizations positively adapt to changing conditions without displaying any stress (Mallak, 1998). The phrase "organizational resilience" is widely used in the field of organizational theory, particularly in literature on crisis management and disaster management and recently in strategic management literature.

The sustainable development of a nation is significantly influenced by small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs). Economic and social elements are among the indicators of a nation's sustainable development. The high percentage of SME failure has a detrimental effect on Nigeria's sustainable growth. Despite the SMEs' acknowledged contributions, Abor and Quartey found that these businesses fail at a relatively high rate in our country (2010). Within the first five years of their existence, almost 75% of SMEs fail (SEDA, 2015).

Additionally, SMEs score poorly when turnover and profitability are considered. Many SMEs operate in hostile rather than favorable conditions due to the very unstable and complex nature of the business environment (Hyder & Lussier, 2016). The high failure rate

and poor performance raise questions about SMEs' capacity to eliminate poverty and generate long-term employment (Cant & Wiid, 2013).

Understanding how entrepreneurs thrive in unpredictable situations and what motivates them during trying times is crucial. Entrepreneurship is frequently accompanied by high levels of stress, numerous challenges, and outcome uncertainty (Lighthelm, 2011). Due to confusing or inadequate information, entrepreneurs frequently make decisions that turn out to be mistakes or misjudgments. Entrepreneurs must constantly adapt their aims and methods to account for shifting eventualities (Adeniran & Johnston, 2012; Bullough & Renko, 2013).

A combination of financial and non-financial elements influence entrepreneurial success. A thorough framework for measuring success is provided by the division of success into organizational and personal criteria (Davidsson, 2005). Ofunoye (2017) discovered a strong correlation between tenacity and individual entrepreneurial performance. According to Gorsuch (1983), the greater the number of personal differences, such as self-efficacy, resilience, and tenacity, the better the fit between the individual and entrepreneurship and the likelihood of personal success.

From the foregoing, various streams of research have been directed towards explaining entrepreneurial success from existing research efforts, stressing what the concept connotes in varying contexts and settings, however, not very many stressed the predictive role we suppose exists between corporate resilience and entrepreneurial success and as such creating the perceived lacuna in this regards. To this end, this current research undertaking

is intended to fill this perceived gap in the literature by identifying the relationship between corporate resilience and the entrepreneurial success of hospitality firms in Rivers State.

Related Problems

The competitive environment is characterized by high levels of uncertainty and change (Cummings & Worley, 2013). In this context, innovation is a central feature of competition and firms possessing technological capabilities create innovations through successfully implementing new techniques to birth entrepreneurial success (Chen, Tang, Jin, Xie & Li, 2014; Prajogo, 2015).

The creation of jobs, the eradication of poverty, and sustained economic growth are all important contributions made by entrepreneurs through their businesses to the sustainable development of a nation. The high percentage of SME failure has a detrimental effect on Nigeria's sustainable growth. Despite the notable contributions of these entrepreneurs, Abor and Quartey claim that the failure rate of these businesses in our country is very high (2010). Within the first five years of their existence, almost 75% of SMEs fail (SEDA, 2015).

The business environment is highly unstable and challenging, and many SMEs operate in a hostile rather than a benign environment resulting in weak turnover and profitability from their operations (Hyder & Lussier, 2016). The high failure rate and weak performance cast a doubt on the ability of these enterprises to remain successful in the long run (Cant & Wiid, 2013).

It's critical to comprehend what motivates entrepreneurship in difficult times and how entrepreneurs survive in an uncertain world. Entrepreneurship is frequently accompanied by high levels of stress, numerous challenges, and outcome uncertainty (Lighthelm, 2011). Resilience is essential among the wide range of potential organizational skills (Jenkins, Wiklund & Brundin, 2014). Resilience, in general, is the capacity for a corporation to adjust to uncertain conditions at the organizational level by being able to dynamically recreate an organization when circumstances change (Bhamra, Dani & Burnard, 2011; King, Newman, & Luthans, 2015; Lengnick-Hall, Beck & Lengnick-Hall, 2011; Linnenluecke, 2015). Resilience is associated with the ability to react to disruptions in a timely manner (Limnios, Mazzarol, Ghadouani, & Schilizzi, 2014; Shin, Taylor, & Seo, 2012).

To be able to react, a firm's employees need to have a high tolerance for unpredictable events and HRPs are a strategic tool that can be employed to help individuals minimize the effect of such external contingencies (Ortin-Angel & Sánchez, 2009). To this end, this research endeavor seeks to ascertain the relationship between corporate resilience and entrepreneurial success of selected hospitality firms in Rivers State.

Objectives

The main aim of the study is to ascertain the relationship between corporate resilience and entrepreneurial success of hospitality firms in Rivers State, other specific objectives are to;

- i. Find out the relationship between robustness and entrepreneurial success of hospitality firms in Rivers State
- ii. Ascertain the relationship between agility and entrepreneurial success of hospitality firms in Rivers State

Hypotheses

H0₁: Robustness has no significant relationship with entrepreneurial success of hospitality firms in Rivers State

H0₂: Agility has no significant relationship with entrepreneurial success of hospitality firms in Rivers State

2.0 Review of Literature

Concept of Corporate Resilience

Although it is used in literature on organizational studies, human resources management, and engineering, the concept of "resilience" has its roots primarily in psychology and the study of ecology (Kantur&Iseri-Say, 2012). In the studies by Werner and Smith (1977) conducted among children whose parents were suffering from severe psychological illnesses, psychological resilience was found to be the basic reason behind children's survival. These kids' capacity for resilience allowed them to increase their capacity for adaptation in order to survive (Werner & Smith, 2001).

Resilience is mostly described in psychological literature as the potential for constructive adaptation to challenging situations (Kantur & Iseri-Say, 2012).

Recent ecological studies have placed a greater emphasis on the systems' flexibility and potential for adaptation (Redman & Kinzig, 2003). When the term is examined in the literature, it is clear that the field of psychology views it primarily as the ability of people to successfully adapt to challenging circumstances, whereas the field of ecology views it primarily as the ability of systems to resist disruption and adapt in order to maintain

sustainability. In the literature on organizational theory, the concept of resilience is explored in relation to crisis management and the systems' potential for flexibility to ensure sustainable disaster management, high-reliability organizations and positive organizational scholarship pieces of literature (Paton & Johnson, 2001). Kendra and Wachtendorf (2003); in their studies when they analyzed the World Trade Organization disaster, defined resilience as the capability to withstand shocks without showing any disintegration. In studying the 1993 Mann Gulch fire disaster, Weick (1993) According to this definition, resilience isn't only about attempting to go forward in the face of uncertainty and change; it's also about finding methods to convert this challenging situation to your benefit. So, according to Kantur and Iseri-Say (2012), corporate resilience entails more than just adaptability; it also involves the company organization being proactive, creative, and solution-oriented.

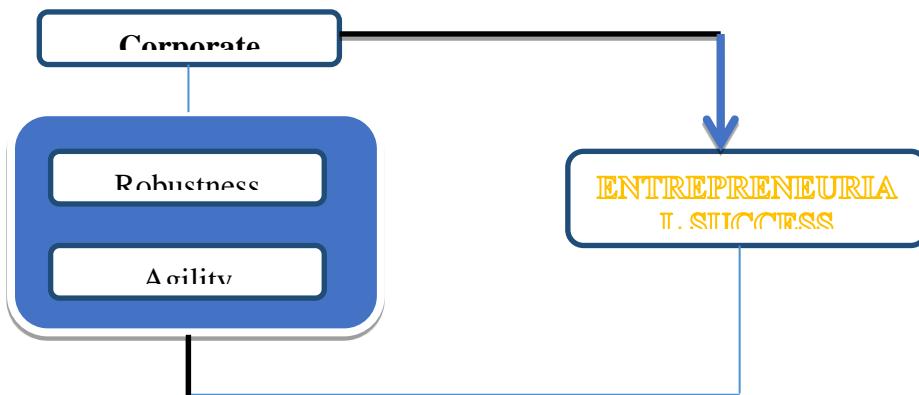


Figure 1.1 Conceptual framework

Source: Conceptual framework as adapted from Kantur and Iseri-Say (2015) and Zwerus (2013) for predictor and criterion variables respectively.

Concept of Entrepreneurial Success

Eisenhardt's research shows a connection between entrepreneurial performance and accuracy (1999). He claimed that the capacity to recognize dangers and opportunities early—and particularly precisely—is a prerequisite for corporate success.

Environmental scanning and corporate performance are closely related, claim Miller and Friesen (1983). According to this study, successful organizations place a lot more emphasis on environmental scanning than unsuccessful ones do. Barringer and Bluedorn (1999), specifically in an entrepreneurial setting, support these findings. Entrepreneurs must have an external orientation to locate, recognize, and take advantage of opportunities when the environment shifts in order to remain competitive. Alvarez and Barney's (2007) theory of discovery states that entrepreneurs find chances and business ideas by changes in their surrounding environment.

However, in a discovery setting, the strategy formulation is finished and constant. This then makes it possible for entrepreneur to use their usual strategic planning abilities.

Organizational effectiveness is the most comprehensive variable among performance indicators (Sparrow & West, 2002), as it includes a variety of complex performance outcomes, including proximal (such as commitment and satisfaction), intermediate (such as customer service), and distal (organizational performance outcomes) (financial performance).

Robustness and Entrepreneurial Success

Robustness is the noun form of the English adjective “robust” which originates from the Latin “robust us” – it simply means firm, hard, strong (Okoh& Haugen, 2015). However, in scientific use, there are different definitions of robustness as stated by Jen (2005) and as yet, there is no universally accepted definition.

There may never be a single definition because the term may be used differently by different fields, and robustness occasionally gets confused with resilience (Pavard, Dugdale, Saoud, Darcy & Salembier, 2007). According to Asbjørnslett and Rausand (1999), robust systems exhibit resistance to unanticipated occurrences, (ii) functionality restoration, and (iii) maintenance of initial stability. This viewpoint is in line with Chandra and Grabis's (2007) assertion that an organization's resilience to external and internal shocks and Ferdows' (1997) ability to adapt to changes in the competitive environment without changing its structure.

A system is considered robust, according to Agarwal, Blockley, and Woodman (2007), if it resists damage that results in a significant loss of form and function. Additionally, robustness, according to Pavard et al. (2007), is the capacity of a system to adjust its behavior to unforeseen circumstances, such as environmental perturbations or internal dysfunctions in the organization of the system.

H01: Selected Rivers State hospitality businesses' robustness and entrepreneurial performance don't significantly correlate with one another.

Agility and Entrepreneurial Success

Corporate agility means the ability to feel and respond to customer-based opportunities in a rapid manner in order to make innovations and engage in competitive activities, a vital and necessary element for survival and success of organization (Hamid, Hosseini, Khoddami, Moshabaki & Azar, 2011). While agility of customers is very important in competitive environments, just a few researches have been done regarding the formation of customer agility in organization. In pieces of literature relating to agility is stated that the main tool and fundamental element for achieving agility in organization is dynamic capability (Sambamurthy, Bharadwaj & Grover, 2003).

Based on the review of the agility literature, business organizations are mostly agile in response to variations in customers' preferences and as such customer agility is the degree to which a firm is able to sense and respond quickly to customer-based opportunities for innovation and competitive action. This definition includes key elements of agility such as capability, sense and, response and speed (Hamid *et al.*, 2011).

Accordingly, Hamid *et al.* (2011) in their study examined entrepreneurial alertness and market agility in order to optimize competitive activities in IT industry of Iran; argued that the tools for, However, as it relates to information technology (IT) competency, establish agility in modern business organizations is a dynamic capability. Competence in the use of IT technologies would increase the agility of telecommunication enterprises whose activities call for such capabilities.

H02: Selected hospitality businesses in Rivers State do not significantly correlate agility with entrepreneurial success.

Relationship between Corporate Resilience and Entrepreneurial Success

Eisenhardt's research shows a connection between entrepreneurial performance and accuracy (1999). He claimed that the capacity to recognize dangers and opportunities early—and particularly precisely—is a prerequisite for corporate success.

Environmental scanning and corporate performance are closely related, claim Miller and Friesen (1983). According to this study, successful organizations place a lot more emphasis on environmental scanning than unsuccessful ones do. Barringer and Bluedorn (1999), specifically in an entrepreneurial setting, support these findings. Entrepreneurs must have an external orientation to locate, recognize, and take advantage of opportunities when the environment shifts in order to remain competitive. According to Alvarez and Barney's theory of discovery (2007), Opportunities and business concepts are found by entrepreneurs through changes in their external environment. However, in a discovery setting, the strategy formulation is finished and constant. This then makes it possible for entrepreneur to use their usual strategic planning abilities.

Bustinza, Vendrell-Herrero, Perez, Arostegui, and Parry (2016) argued in their study that human resource practices (HRPs) that foster resilience within an organization are necessary for addition to technological capabilities for the successful implementation of technological change. Technology capabilities and organizational effectiveness are mediated by resilience capacities, while environment dynamism and competitive intensity

moderate this link. Structural equation modeling was used to present and evaluate a model on a primary sample of 205 manufacturing companies. The findings emphasized the significance of HRPs in fostering resilience, which enables businesses to continuously adapt to change and subsequently improve organizational effectiveness.

Small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs), according to a study by Fatokie et al. (2018), are crucial to the sustainable growth of a nation. Economic and social elements are among the indicators of a nation's sustainable development. For the economy to grow sustainably, create jobs, and reduce poverty, it is essential that small and medium-sized businesses are sustainable. The high failure rate of SMEs has a detrimental effect on the sustainable growth of South Africa. Investigating the link between entrepreneurial resilience and the success of SMEs in South Africa was the goal of the study. Success was evaluated according to both organizational and personal standards. Entrepreneurial resilience was assessed using the CD-RISC 10 (Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale 10). Through the surveying process, information from 170 small company owners was gathered. Data from the subjects were gathered using the self-administered questionnaire approach. For sampling, convenience and snowball methods were employed. Data analysis methods included descriptive statistics, confirmatory factor analysis, correlation, and regression analysis. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha.

The findings showed a strong correlation between entrepreneurial resilience and success on both the individual and organizational levels. The sustainability of SMEs can be ensured by finding ways to increase small business owners' resilience.

Empirical Review

In their 2017 assessment of the literature, Korber and McNaughton examined how entrepreneurship and resilience interact. Six (6) academic conversations were found, each of which makes use of a different conception of entrepreneurship and resilience. Based on those discussions, weaknesses in the available literature were evaluated, and potential directions for further research are listed. To lay the groundwork for a critical examination of each avenue of research, 144 papers organized into six scholarly conversations were reviewed in a methodical, multidisciplinary manner. The study outlined six conversations or lines of inquiry at the intersection of entrepreneurship and resilience, including resilience as a characteristics or trait of entrepreneurial businesses or individuals; resilience as a trigger for entrepreneurship intention; entrepreneurial behavior as an enhancement of organizational resilience; and entrepreneurial firms fostering macro-level (regions, communities, economies) resilience, resiliency.

Bustinza, Vendrell-Herrero, Perez, Arostegui, and Parry (2016) argued in their study that human resource practices (HRPs) that foster resilience within an organization are necessary for addition to technological capabilities for the successful implementation of technological change. Technology capabilities and organizational effectiveness are mediated by resilience capacities, while environment dynamism and competitive intensity moderate this link. Structural equation modeling was used to present and evaluate a model on a primary sample of 205 manufacturing companies. The findings emphasized the

significance of HRP_s in fostering resilience, which enables businesses to continuously adapt to change and subsequently improve organizational effectiveness.

Small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) are crucial to a nation's sustainable development, according to a study by Fatoki (2018) on SMEs. Economic and social variables are used to gauge a nation's sustainable development. To create jobs, fight poverty, and promote sustainable economic growth, small and medium-sized businesses must be sustainable. The high percentage of SME failure has a detrimental effect on South Africa's sustainable development. The study's goal was to discover how South African SMEs' success and entrepreneurship resilience are related. Both corporate and personal standards were used to gauge success. Entrepreneurial resilience was evaluated using the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale 10 (CD-RISC 10).

Through the surveying process, information from 170 small company owners was gathered. Data from the subjects were gathered using the self-administered questionnaire approach. For sampling, convenience and snowball methods were employed. Data analysis methods included descriptive statistics, confirmatory factor analysis, correlation, and regression analysis. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The findings showed a strong correlation between entrepreneurial resilience and success on both the individual and organizational levels. The sustainability of SMEs can be ensured by finding ways to increase small business owners' resilience.

In their research project, Dewald and Bowen (2010) argued that established businesses that encounter disruptive business model innovations must select whether to react passively,

resolutely, aggressively, or resiliently. Their study concentrated on managers of small incumbent enterprises' robust reactions to simultaneously perceived threats and opportunities. They claimed, using cognitive framing arguments, that perceived urgency moderates situation threat while perceived urgency moderates perceptions of opportunity. In the context of real estate brokerage, where small incumbents face significant threats from disruptive business model innovations like bargain brokers, they tested their paradigm. 126 real estate brokers' data were analyzed, and the results mostly support their approach. After that, they offered their research's consequences for current owners of small businesses.

In their 2017 article, Corner, Singh, and Pavlovich investigated how entrepreneurs' emotions and psychological states changed following business failure. As a result, it looked into how much resilience entrepreneurs display, which is defined by psychologists as steadiness in functioning throughout time despite going through a traumatic occurrence. Despite being a crippling experience, failure is rarely examined concerning entrepreneurial resilience, according to the authors. The investigation is essential to the development of the enterprise because re-entering the entrepreneurial world requires resilience. Eleven (11) New Zealand entrepreneurs' post-failure behaviors are revealed by a qualitative, narrative research approach. Data were acquired from both primary and secondary sources using the purposive sampling technique, and analysis included coding. The majority of business owners exhibit resilience, or stable levels of functioning. Their findings thus cast doubt on

the notion that rehabilitation is necessary following venture failure. The implications for re-entering the entrepreneurial world as well as how to deal with failure are examined.

3.0 Methodology

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design in studying eight (8) selected hospitality firms which constitutes our accessible population, however our study units include the managerial employees of the firms having that our unit of analysis is at organizational level of the organization. The human resource department provided us the data on functional departments within the organization. Out of one hundred and sixty-nine (169) employees; sixty eight copies were retrieved and analyzed; the instrument with which we elicited data from the respondents is the questionnaire and was analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling statistical tool from AMOS version 20.00.

Model Specifications

Regression/Structural Model

The functional models for the relationship between corporate resilience and entrepreneurial success are given as follows

$$ES = f(CR) \quad (1.1)$$

$$ES = f(R, A) \quad (1.2)$$

Where;

CR = Corporate Resilience

R = Robustness

A = Agility

ES = Entrepreneurial Success

ESC = (Mean composite of Entrepreneurial Success)

CRC = Corporate Resilience Composite (Mean composite of Robustness and Agility)

The statistical (empirical) models for these relationships are given as follows:

$$ES_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 R_i + \beta_2 A_i + \epsilon_i \quad (1.3)$$

Where β_0, λ_0 and ϕ_0 in models are regression intercepts; β 's, λ 's and ϕ 's are the slope parameters capturing the effects of R, A and ϵ_{it} , u_{it} and e_{it} are the error terms representing

all unmodelled factors. The results of models 1.1 and 1.2 would be used to test hypotheses 1 and 2.

Where γ_0 is the model intercept, γ_1 is the slope parameter that captures the effect of Robustness composite and Entrepreneurial success, γ_2 is the slope parameter that captures the effect of Agility composite and entrepreneurial success.

4.0 Results and Discussion

Table 1.1 Demographics of Respondents

ORGANIZATIONS		Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dewiz Travels and Tours	13	19.1	19.1	19.1
	UK Travel Agency Limited	9	13.2	13.2	32.4
	Hano Hospitality and Suites	10	14.7	14.7	47.1
	Paloma Hotel	5	7.4	7.4	54.4
	Ashford and Gray Event Management Limited	9	13.2	13.2	67.6
	Somitel Hospitality firms and Resort Ltd	7	10.3	10.3	77.9
	BMH (Hospital) Port Harcourt	9	13.2	13.2	91.2
	Rivers Transport Company Limited	6	8.8	8.8	100.0
	Total	68	100.0	100.0	
	AGE				
	18-25 years	3	4.4	4.4	4.4
	26-35 years	20	29.4	29.4	33.8
	36-45 years	29	42.6	42.6	76.5
	Above 45 years	16	23.5	23.5	100.0
	Total	68	100.0	100.0	
	GENDER				
	Male	31	45.6	45.6	45.6
	Female	37	54.4	54.4	100.0
	Total	68	100.0	100.0	
	EDUCATIONAL QUAL.				
	WASCE	1	1.5	1.5	1.5
	OND/HND/NCE	14	20.6	20.6	22.1
	Bsc/BA	25	36.8	36.8	58.8
	Msc/ MBA/PhD	15	22.1	22.1	80.9
	Others	13	19.1	19.1	100.0
	Total	68	100.0	100.0	
	JOB DESIGNATIONS				
	Senior Management Staff	19	27.9	27.9	27.9
	Middle Management Staff	30	44.1	44.1	72.1
	Junior Management Staff	19	27.9	27.9	100.0
	Total	68	100.0	100.0	
	DURATION AT WORK				
	Below 10 years	6	8.8	8.8	8.8
	11-15 years	32	47.1	47.1	55.9
	Above 15 years	30	44.1	44.1	100.0
	Total	68	100.0	100.0	

SPSS output, Version 20 – Field Survey, 2022

From Table 1.1; a total number of one hundred and sixty-nine (169) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the employees of eight (8) selected hospitality firms in Rivers State; sixty-eight (68) copies were valid and usable, and were analyzed. Thus, the demographic distribution of respondents was reported in Table 1.1.

Structural Model

We used the recursive structural model approach to predict the dependent variable. Parameters of structural equation modeling when means are not analyzed include (1) direct effects on endogenous variables from other variables, either exogenous or endogenous; and (2) the variances and covariance of exogenous variables. This means that the model has a covariance structure only, not also a mean structure. This model, adopted the multiple-indicator measurement approach, using the reflective indicators, reflective measurement model and recursive structural model. Thus, we assessed the direct relationship between the exogenous constructs and endogenous construct(s) ($X \rightarrow Y$).

Interpretation of Results (Inferential Analysis):

This section gives attention to the interpretation of the results concerning the inferential data analysis. Two hypotheses were analyzed in two clusters. The analysis was based on significance criteria of $\beta > 0.3$ (Brown, 2015); $r > 0.7$ (Hair *et al.*, 2014) and $p < 0.05$. Results on each cluster of the hypotheses are summarized in table formats. These tables will serve as reference points for the interpretation of the results.

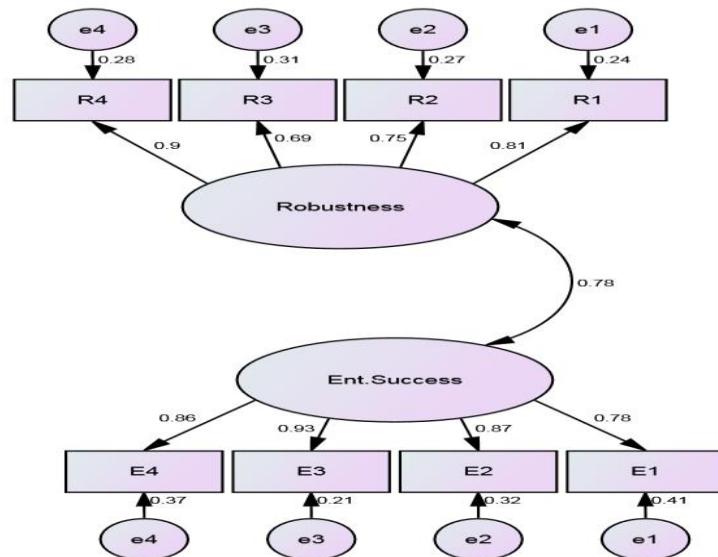


Figure 1.2: Structural Model Correlating Hypotheses 1

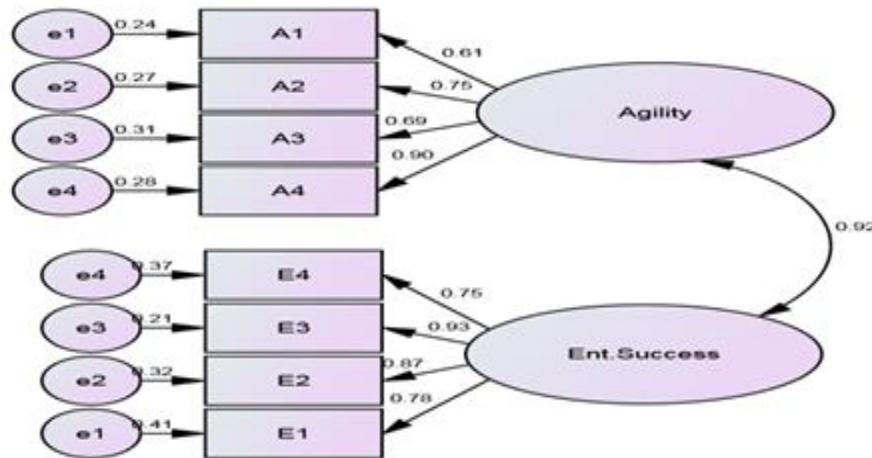


Figure 1.3: Structural Model Correlating Hypotheses 2

Table 1.2: Result of Standardized and Unstandardized Regression Estimate of the Model.

S/ N	Moderation Stage	Relationship	Std. Beta	Actua l Beta	S.E	C.R	P	Remark
1	R →ES (Hypothesis 1)	Robustness and Entrepreneurial success	0.780	0.031	0.35	3.14	0.000	Not Supported
2	A →ES (Hypothesis 2)	Agility and Entrepreneurial Success	0.920	0.027	0.20	3.07	0.000	Not Supported

Source: Amos Version 22.0.0 output on research data, 2022

Discussion of Findings

The study examined the relationship between corporate resilience and entrepreneurial success of selected hospitality firms in Rivers State.; two hypotheses were formulated as tentative answers to research questions raised and were tested to find support for the propositions, thus;

The result of the tested $H0_{1-2}$ reported the existence of a significant relationship between the dimensions of corporate resilience (robustness and agility) and entrepreneurial success; ((where $\beta = 0.780$, $r = 0.031$, $p = < 0.05$; $\beta = 0.780$, $r = 0.027$, $p = < 0.05$); This viewpoint is in line with Chandra and Grabis's (2007) assertion that an organization's resilience to external and internal shocks and Ferdows' (1997) ability to adapt to changes in the competitive environment without changing its structure. Corporate agility is the capacity to perceive and react to customer-based opportunities quickly in order to innovate and take part in competitive activities, a crucial and essential component for an organization's survival and success (Hamid et al., 2011).

5.0 Conclusion

Economic and social indicators are used to assess a nation's sustainable development, and small and medium-sized firms (SMEs) are essential to it. Small and medium-sized firms must be sustainable if they are to generate employment, combat poverty, and foster sustainable economic growth. It is essential to comprehend how entrepreneurs flourish in uncertain circumstances and what inspires them throughout challenging times. High levels of stress, multiple obstacles, and unclear results are usually associated with entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs regularly make decisions that turn out to be blunders or poor judgments because of unclear or insufficient information. Entrepreneurs must continuously modify their objectives and procedures to take into account changing circumstances.

Empirical reports from the data analyzed, lend the following conclusions relative to the scope of our study; Robustness directly relates to entrepreneurial success; the capacity to adapt to changes in the marketplace without turning to structural modifications, ensuring the success of young businesspeople. Accordingly, agility in the workplace is significantly related to entrepreneurial success; as it concerns age, experience and resources of the organization, the older generation of workers tend to possess the age-long cultural practices and to pass it on that it does not, while the younger generations ensure the organization remain refreshed with the trends in the business environment with the intent of upholding innovativeness in the organization.

6.0 Recommendations of the Study

It is not advisable to operate or function within this knowledge-based economy and a technology-driven environment without encouraging resilience in the organization

The following recommendations come about as a result of prior findings and conclusions reached relative to the variables studied, thus;

- i. Agility is encouraged to ensure its balance as what the male employees will be limited, the female counterparts will offer so that the level of innovation in the organization is enhanced.
- ii. It will be beneficial to modern organizations to include a diverse workforce as it concerns the age of workers, the older generation of workers are present to uphold and pass on the values and cultures of the organization to the younger ones, **and succession** effectiveness can also be derived in that way.
- iii. The modern organization is such that strives for work-life balance for its employees; business institutions that encourage this, will unarguably derive the best from their workers because employees are also social as well as economic beings.
- iv. Organizations today are mostly filled with the young generation of workers; most times the experience needed is not found among them; to this end, there should be diversity in the workforce relative to age; then, other network practices to cross-fertilize ideas should be welcomed to improve performance levels.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire Section**Section A**

Instruction: Please answer the following questions sincerely and tick (✓) where necessary

1. Name of Organization
2. Age: (a) below 35 years [] (b) 36 – 40 years [] (c) 41 – 45 years [] (d) 46 – 50 years [] (e) Above 50 years []
3. Gender: (a) Male [] (b) Female []
4. Academic Qualification: (a) SSCE/GCE/Equivalent [] (b) NCE/OND/Equivalent [] (c) B.A/B.Sc/B.Ed/HND [] (d) MBA/MSc/M.Ed/MA [] (e) Ph.D [] (f) If others, please specify.....
5. Your position in the organization.....
6. How long have you worked with your organization? (a) 1–5 years [] (b) 6–10 [] (c) 11–15 [] (d) Above 15 years []

Section B

This copy of the questionnaire has been constructed on a 4-point Likert' Scale – indicating; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD).

S/N	Robustness	Scale			
		SA	A	D	SD
1	Our organization stands straight and preserves its position				
2	Our organization is successful in generating diverse solutions				
3	Our organization has the strength to use required resources				
4	Our organization shows resistance to the end in order not to lose				

S/N	Agility	Scale			
		SA	A	D	SD
1	We rapidly take actions as need arises				
2	We usually develop alternatives in order to benefit from negative circumstances				
3	Our organization is agile in taking required action when needed				
4	Our organization is powerful and as such we are not easily affected by outside factors				

S/N	Entrepreneurial Success	Scale			
		SA	A	D	SD
1	We look out for new market opportunities and for new products/services				
2	We usually discover new ways to improve existing products/services				
3	We identify new areas for potential growth and success				
4	We design product/services that solve current problems				

Appendix B: AMOS version 20.00 Output

Outer Loadings

	Robustness	Agility	Ent. Success
R1	0.922038		
R2	0.951825		
R3	0.873755		
R4	0.931667		
A1		0.954337	
A2		0.934167	
A3		0.889757	
A4		0.872235	
ES1			0.959911
ES2			0.985290
ES3			0.971181
ES4			0.983273

Latent Variable Correlations

	Robustness	Agility	Ent. Success
Robustness	1.000000		
Agility	0.960446	1.000000	
Ent. Success	0.819738	0.886600	1.000000

Cross Loading

	Robustness	Agility	Ent. Success
R1	0.922038	0.794897	0.61914
R2	0.951825	0.8152	0.854016

R3	0.873755	0.739556	0.865938
R4	0.931667	0.784022	0.636109
A1	0.772078	0.954337	0.683682
A2	0.825177	0.934167	0.664556
A3	0.714045	0.889757	0.661797
A4	0.804716	0.872235	0.881072
ES1	0.843054	0.793304	0.959911
ES2	0.807141	0.782058	0.98529
ES3	0.756544	0.728528	0.971181
ES4	0.78043	0.753933	0.983273

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