

**ASSESSING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
NIGER DELTA DURING 7<sup>TH</sup> AND 8<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

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**CERTIFICATION**

This dissertation titled “*Assessing the Performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> National Assembly)*” presented by **NKEM AGIDIGBO (PG/NLS/1900028)** has met the partial requirements for the award of the degree of Masters in Legislative Studies (MLS) of the National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies/University of Benin, Edo State.

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## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this dissertation is a product of my research efforts, undertaken under the supervision of Dr. Adeyemi Fajingbesi. It is an original work and no part of it has ever been presented for the award of any degree anywhere. All sources of information have been duly acknowledged through the references.

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**APPROVAL PAGE**

This is to certify that this dissertation “*Assessing the Performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> National Assembly)*” has been read and approved as having met the partial requirements for the award of the degree of Masters in Legislative Studies of the University of Benin/National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies is approved for contribution to knowledge.

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## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to Almighty God.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

Centre LSD	Africa Centre for leadership strategy and Development
CFRN	Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
CISLAC	Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre
CPS	Collegiate Project Services
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
HYPREP	Hydrocarbon Pollution Remediation Project
MDAs	Ministries, Departments, and Agencies
NDDC	Niger Delta Development Commission
NDU	Niger Delta University
NNNGOs	Nigeria Network of NGOs
PAP	Presidential Amnesty Programme
PH	Port Harcourt
PLAC	Policy & Legal Advocacy Centre
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
WRAPA	Women's Right Alternative Protection Advancement

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## ABSTRACT

This study assessed the performance of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Senate Committees on Niger Delta Affairs focusing primarily on its oversight function. The specific objectives of the study were to assess the extent of the performance of the oversight function of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta between 2011-2019. The study also examined the effects of the activities of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta on the people of the Niger Delta region within the study period. Lastly, it identified the factors militating against the effective performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta, and suggested strategies that would mitigate the challenges affecting the effective performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta. This to bridge the gap in knowledge created by the scanty literary presence of the activities of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs and its affiliate agencies like the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) during the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Senate.

The study adopted the mixed research design relying on quantitative and qualitative data. Data sources were primary and secondary. Primary data was obtained from the administration of the questionnaire (adapted from the Collegiate Project Services [CPS] 8-Factor Model for Committee Diagnosis) while secondary data were taken from the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs sessional reports, official publications of the National Assembly, journal articles, magazines, books, the internet, etc. Purposive sampling technique was used for the selection of data and respondents while content analysis was used for the analysis of qualitative data. The quantitative data were analyzed and presented using percentages and tables.

Findings revealed that the Committee undertakes its legislative tasks within the context of the traditional roles of the legislature. However, this is yet to translate to an improved project execution rate in the region, improved standard of living for the people of the Niger Delta, and so on. Consequently, the study found some reasons for the unsatisfactory performance of the committee as the inadequacy of resources, lack of cooperation between the committee and MDAs, and so on. Also, measures that would enhance the performance of the committee in the future were noted as improved cooperation between the committee and its agencies, and dedication to responsibilities, among others.

Conclusively, although the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs is a critical success factor for any meaningful development in the Niger Delta region, there is a heightened concern about the dedication of the Committee to its legislative mandate given the place of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs in ensuring probity in governance on one hand and mounting allegations of corruption in MDAs such as the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), the Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP), and so on on the other hand. Nevertheless, in the short to long term, the findings of this study if implemented, would reposition the committee for effectiveness to impact the socio-economic wellbeing of the people of the Niger Delta region.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background to the study

The legislature is considered one of the most basic structures in any political system. Hence, Abegunde (2016) noted that the legislative arm of government performs three functions which included legislative, representative, and oversight. Explaining, Woodley, Sahgal, and Stapenhurst (2004) observed that members of the legislature carry out their duties as representatives of the people. They represent the people's will and are the source of authority in democratic nations. The members of the national legislature are elected by eligible voters who form a group of constituencies representing the whole country. However, there are countries where the quota system is practiced where some seats are set aside to ensure that certain special interest groups are represented. In Uganda for example, certain parliamentary seats are reserved for women across districts (International IDEA, 2020). This is to increase the number of women participating in the political process. Despite this reservation, some women contest elections and win in the parliament based on non-gender policy (International IDEA, 2020).

The legislative function of the legislature is to introduce legislations. Aside from this, they also can approve, amend or reject government bills (Woodley, Sahgal & Stapenhurst, 2004). When bills are introduced in the parliament (assembly), they go through various stages based on the specific countries legislative operational framework. These stages are easily categorized as follows: First reading, second reading/committee stage, third reading/consideration, and presidential/royal assent (Abiola, 2018).The legislature carries out its functions of representation,

legislative, and oversight by ensuring that governments follow the wishes and intent of the people when implementing policies and programs. Woodley et al (2004) resolved that the legislature undertakes representation, legislative, and oversight functions in two ways: they initiate bills that reflect the wishes of their constituencies, make laws that govern the conduct of the executive for the general welfare of the people, as well as oversee the preparation of a given policy (*ex-ante* oversight) or can supervise the execution and implementation of a given policy (*ex-post* oversight). However, the roles of the legislature are dependent on whether such mechanisms are employed before or after an enacted government policy (Pelizzo & Stapenhurst, 2004). Regardless of the method of a legislative function utilized by the legislature, accountability is at the core concept of legislative oversight governance.

The people have the power to hold the government accountable through the legislative arm of the government (Irawan, 2014). This is why it is so important that the legislature can hold the government accountable in the quest to develop a credible state (Pelizzo & Stapenhurst, 2004). Members of the Legislature are appointed to various committees or commissions to carry out their duties. One of these is the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs (Abiola, 2018). Constitutionally, the National Assembly has been empowered to regulate its procedure (Section 60 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria [CFRN] 1999 as altered) as well as to nominate committees for such purpose as it deems fit (CFRN, Section 62(2)). Given this, the Senate Committee on Niger Delta derives its legitimacy from Order 98(38) of the Senate Standing Orders 2015 (as amended). The portion of the Standing Order states categorically that

- (1) there shall be a Committee to be known as Committee on Niger-Delta appointed at the commencement of the life of the Senate.
- (2) The Committee's jurisdiction shall include:
  - (a) Niger-Delta Development Commission.

- (b) Matters affecting the Niger-Delta and
- (c) Annual budget estimates.

The purpose of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs is to oversee the books of executive agencies such as the Niger Delta Development Commission and to examine the effectiveness of government programs and actions in the Niger Delta region. This is done to ensure that the public funds are spent properly as well as to improve the management of funds raised through taxes. Indeed, the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs has become significant in the development of the region due to the rising need for the development of the Niger Delta region.

## **1.2. Statement of the problem**

John Locke proposed the principle of separation of power which specifies how powers are shared between the different arms of government. Within the framework of the principle of separation of powers, the Inter-Parliamentary Union [IPU] (2007) noted that the legislature's mandate is to propose laws within which the executive is held accountable. Based on the suggestion of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, there is a need for supervision, monitoring, and review of government activities as well as policy implementation. Therefore, Inter-Parliamentary Union recommended that legislative performance is premeditated to: prescribe, supervise, evaluate, spot, and prevent abuse of any arbitrary behavior, or unconstitutional and illegal government or public agencies' comportment; ensure government accountability concerning the way and manner in which taxpayers monies are utilized; ensure parliamentary policy authorization of government announced policies are effectively delivered; enhance the operational transparency of government and boost government's public trust, which is vital to effective policy delivery.

Since most of the time, a legislative house cannot look into the matters that are more closely than the subdivision of its members, they often rely on committees to do so (Dan-Azumi, 2019).

Committees help the legislature develop and implement policies or procedures to address specific problems or issues. This explanation was further strengthened by the provisions of Section 62(1) of the Federal Republic of Nigeria's 1999 Constitution, which states that the House of Representatives or the Senate may appoint a committee for any purpose that it deems fit. Given the constitutional basis, the existence of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta as one of the Committees in the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria becomes justified. To achieve its legislative mandate, scholars have developed various tools like interpellation, question, question time, etc. (Pelizzo, 2011; Abiola, 2018) to be employed by the Committee. Although these tools fit into two general conditions of oversight espoused by Abiola (2018). Explicitly, while necessary conditions define the tools of oversight themselves, sufficient condition underlies the degree of use of the oversight tools. However, a study by Abiola, Asemota, and Ahmadu (2018) showed that Nigeria has almost all oversight tools but corruption concerns continue to mount irrespective.

In fact, recent revelations of the diversion of N6.2Bn COVID-19 fund and N139Bn fraud by the Niger Delta Development Commission [NDDC] board (Punch Nigeria, 2020, 22<sup>nd</sup> October) confirm the assertion by Abiola (2018) on the existence of corruption in public administration regardless of the abundance of oversight tools. To illustrate, the probe of Interim Management Committee (IMC) of the NDDC where startling revelations of financial mismanagement were made, brings to the fore a question on the sufficiency of the oversight tools deployed by the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs which has jurisdiction over the NDDC (Premium Times Nigeria, 2020, 11<sup>th</sup> August). Nevertheless, given the place of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs in representing the views of the people of the Niger Delta region through its

oversight mandate, this study would evaluate the performance of oversight by the Committee in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Assemblies.

### **1.3. Research questions**

The focus of the study would be guided by the following questions:

- 1) To what extent did the Senate Committee on Niger Delta perform its oversight mandate between 2011-2019?
- 2) How have the activities of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta between 2011-2019 affected the people of the region?
- 3) What are the factors militating against the effective performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta?
- 4) What strategies would mitigate the challenges affecting the effective performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta?

### **1.4. Research objectives**

The broad objective of this study is to evaluate the activities of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Assemblies. The specific objectives are to;

- (i) assess the extent of the performance of the oversight function by the Senate Committee on Niger Delta between 2011-2019.
- (ii) examine the effects of the activities of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta between 2011-2019 on the people of the Niger Delta region.
- (iii) identify the factors militating against the effective performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta.

- (iv) Suggest strategies that would mitigate the challenges affecting the effective performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta.

### **1.5. Scope of the study**

The study would assess the performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta with a focus on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> National Assembly which covers the period of 2011 to 2019. The choice of the study period resulted from the need to bring issues of the development of the Niger Delta region to literary prominence given the activities of the militants which may have impacted oversight activities of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta. Given the role of the National Assembly which encompasses aspects of representation, legislation, and oversight functions, the analytical scope of this study is delimited to the Committee's oversight activities which in fact covers its representation and lawmaking functions. Geographically, the study is delimited to the National Assembly which has the powers to legislate on issues that cover a wide jurisdiction taking into account that such commission was established to nip the agitations by the citizens of the region.

### **1.6. Significance of the study**

The findings of this study would proffer strategies to improve the legislation, representation, and oversight functions of the committees of the National Assembly in general and the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs in specific. Within the larger body of knowledge, the outcome of the research would be contextualized to bridge the existing knowledge gap in the aspect of the effect of the performance of Senate Committees on Niger Delta Affairs on the Niger Delta region. With this, the research would serve as a springboard for students and other researchers in this area of knowledge. Similarly, Parliamentarians, as well as Civil Society Organizations

(CSOs), would find the outcomes of the study significant in policy contributions. Also, the Federal Government of Nigeria would find the result of this study helpful as it would provide insights on the Niger Delta region.

### **1.7. Definition of key concepts**

**Senate Committee on Niger Delta:** A legislative committee at the National Assembly with the statutory standing order to ensure rapid, even, and sustainable development of the Niger Delta region through legislative representation, law-making, and oversight on the region's development commission.

**7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Senate:** The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> senate imply the legislative dispensations inaugurated on June 6, 2011 – June 6, 2015, and on June 9, 2015 - June 9, 2019, within the Fourth Republic of Nigeria as stipulated by the 1999 constitution.

**Legislative Oversight:** Legislative oversight is a process utilized by the legislature to perform its duties of checks and balances in a democracy. A legislative oversight function is a tool utilized by the legislature to perform its duties under the 1999 Constitution.

### **1.8. Organization of the study**

The research is organized into five chapters. Chapter one provides a background to the study, as well as a statement of the research problem, questions, and its objectives. The study limitations, scope, terms definition, and organization of the study are contained also in chapter one. Scholarly opinions, as well as the theoretical framework, are provided in chapter two for appraisal. This chapter also provides empirical reviews of existing literature. The methodology which comprised of research design, sampling procedure, research instrument, sources of data, and the method of data analysis and presentation is contained in chapter three. Presentation and

analysis of gathered data as well as discussions of findings are provided in chapter four. Lastly, a summary, observations, conclusion, and recommendations of the study are provided in chapter five. Furthermore, chapter five also provides specific contributions to a body of knowledge thereby offering suggestions for further study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This chapter reviews previous studies related to the variables being examined. In context, kinds of literature on the legislative institution, the legislative practice of the committee system, were reviewed. Lastly, the Distributive Committee Theory was adopted as the framework for conceptualizing the study.

#### **2.1. The Legislative Institution**

The legislature is regarded as playing a pivotal role in any government and as the people-oriented branch of government tasked with expressing and articulating the collective will of the people in the machinery of government (Okoosi-Simbine, 2010). Edosa and Azelama (1995) traced the evolution of the legislature to the need for executive advisory bodies. Scholars have identified bicameral and unicameral legislatures. Bicameral legislatures have two chambers, whereas unicameral legislatures have one chamber. Nigeria's National Assembly is an example of the bicameral legislature because it is made up of the Senate (Upper House) and the House of Representatives (Lower House). By institutional design, both chambers are to act as checks and balances on each other. Regardless of the structure of the legislature, the chamber is known for lawmaking, representation, and oversight.

The legislature has varying powers and functions in different states. In some political systems, the legislature wields real power by wielding broad powers and making decisions based on widely disparate processes, whereas in others, the legislature serves only as a rubber stamp for decisions made elsewhere. Based on this, Nijzink, Mozaffar & Azevedo (2006) alluded that the Soviet Union's legislature was seen as a rubber stamp assembly that was responsible for validating the policies of the government. In Africa, the weakness of the legislative institution is attributable to colonial legacies. Burnell (2003) supported this as he argued that legislative institutions during colonial eras was mainly used for relaying government policies and facilitating the recruitment and retention of political operatives and journalists. Despite being labeled as weak; the legislative authority of African nations varies widely. For instance, in Kenya, the parliament has a strong presence while in Senegal it is weak. Given this, Barkan, Ademolekun and Zhou (2004) opined that the various factors that affect the formation and operation of the legislature vary depending on the structure of the society and the rules governing it.

In an expose, Okoosi-Simbine (2010) noted that the design of a legislature is contingent on the various factors that influence society and its traditions. This means that, for instance, the size of the legislature, its frequency, and mode of power-sharing, are all affected by the society's needs and its traditions. This notwithstanding, Okoosi-Simbine found that there are a growing number of legislative bodies that are considered as important governing partners because they represent, shape laws, and exercise a degree of oversight or control over the executive. This may have prompted Saliu and Mohammad (2010) to argue that the role of the legislature in a democracy is more significant than that of less democratic nations. Performing these functions contribute to the improvement of government by equipping it with the necessary resources and capacity to monitor and respond to the public's sentiments and dissatisfactions.

The legislature performs various functions that are not identified in the literature (Johnson & Nakamura, 1999). Johnson and Nakamura note that some of these include putting governments in power through various means, such as an electoral college (like United Kingdom and United States of America); using apportionment formulae to represent various ethnic, religious, language, and geographic differences in their states (India and Ethiopia); serve as a recruiting pool for other positions in government. etc. Other discrete functions include; informing the electorate about the various roles and responsibilities of a member of parliament. While the functions of the legislature may vary depending on the country and region, legislatures are known for three distinct functions lawmaking, representation, and oversight (Abegunde, 2016).

**a) Legislation:** The duties of the legislature are stated as being the basic and most important roles of the legislative branch (Abonyi, 2006). The legislature is the body that writes the rules of society. It is also responsible for making laws that are in the state's interest. These laws may originate from the private members' bills or the executive branch (Benjamin, 2010). According to Awotokun (1998), laws must be made in the interest of the general public and should be of good quality. Abonyi (2006) also noted that bills should be thoroughly examined before they are passed. According to Kousoulas (1975), the legislative powers are often reduced to a mere deliberative assembly when the executive oversteps its authority and makes concessions to certain groups or individuals. However, Heywood (2007) noted that the twentieth century witnessed a decline in the legislative power of many countries. Heywood suggested that this situation had reduced many legislative bodies to mere talking shops that do little more than rubber-stamp decisions that have effectively been made elsewhere.

**b) Oversight:** The oversight function is a fundamental part of the legislative process and is carried out in a wide variety of ways and means. It is often referred to as a major component

of the legislative activities of modern democracy (Fashagba, 2009). National Democratic Institute for International Affairs [NDI] (2000) stated that oversight is the most important function of a legislature. It stems from the endless wielding of executive powers. Saliu and Muhammad (2010) defined legislative oversight as a process that involves the legislative body's active participation in monitoring and analyzing the performance of the executive branch. The legislature is the branch of government that has the responsibility to oversee the actions and omissions of the government (Okoosi-Simbine, 2010). Azelama and Edosa (1995) described the role of legislative oversight as keeping a watchful eye on the activities of the executive. The legislative oversight of executive activity is aimed at ensuring that public policy is being administered under the intended legislative intent (Commonwealth Parliamentary Association [CPA], 2002). The legislative function does not end once a bill is enacted. It continues afterwards following activities linked to the passage of bills (NDI, 2000). After participating in the making of laws, it is the legislature's responsibility to ensure that they are being implemented effectively. Referring to the oversight functions of the legislature, Woodrow Wilson averred that:

A representative body must diligently look into every aspect of government. It is meant to be the eyes and the voice, and to embody the wisdom and will of its constituents. Unless Congress has the proper tools to acquaint the public with the various acts and the various administrative agencies of the government, the country will not be able to learn how they are being served....The informing function of Congress should be preferred even to its legislative function (Wilson, 1985).

The Constitution of India provides that the Executive branch of government is responsible to the Legislature. The oversight function is a mechanism that enables the Parliament to hold the government accountable for its actions and omissions. This function can also prevent the government from undermining its policies and procedures. Based on this, Roberts (2002) stated that the concept of oversight is a vital part of the law-making process and is often invoked to

justify the legislative process. The legislative branch carries out various oversight functions over the executive some of which include the appointment of officials and the financial behavior of the government, etc.

In Nigeria, the National Assembly (NASS) is charged with the oversight of executive agencies following the provisions of Sections 88 and 89 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999. However, while the legislative powers of the Federation have been vested on the National Assembly following the stipulations of Section 4 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as altered) to create laws that meet the needs of the country's citizens, it is also a legislature's role to evaluate whether the laws it has passed achieve their intended outcome(s). Therefore, the legislature in Nigeria oversees the executive arm of the government using several tools at its disposal (Abiola, 2018). This provides the legal basis for the activities of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta. The committee on Niger Delta further derives its legitimacy from Order 98(38) of the Senate Standing Orders 2015 (as amended) which empowers it to exercise its oversight function in the areas of committee hearings, hearing in plenary sessions of the parliament, the creation of commissions of inquiry, questions, question time, interpellations.

**c) Representation:** The role of the legislature is central to the administration of the state. This, according to Awotokun (1998), is largely due to the complexity of modern government. The legislative institution serves as a vehicle through which the various interests of the population are represented. The representative function of a legislature is argued to give citizens a say in the management of their country (Edosa & Azelama, 1995). Members of the legislature are elected to represent the interests of various groups in a society. This allows them to articulate and advance their concerns and ideas (Simmons, 2002).

According to Edigheji (2002), the idea of representative assembly can be traced back to the ancient city of Rome. Legislators have dual roles. First, they represent the people they represent, and second, they represent the government in their constituency (Roberts, 2002). The legislature is the place where the people of the country can have their political representation. This is a central component of democracy (Davies, 2004; Saliu & Muhammad, 2010). The legislative function is a key component of a democracy. It carries out its duties through the formation and implementation of policies and procedures. The legislative process is expected to involve the participation of various political parties and individuals. The function of the legislature is to promote the legitimacy of public policy and reduce the estrangement between the governed and the government (Edosa & Azelama, 1995).

**d) Financial Function:** The legislature's financial function is also its responsibility. It is supposed to approve the expenditures of the government. All government spending, except those specified in the Constitution, must be approved by the legislature (Sanyal, 2009). Additional expenditure may be sanctioned through a supplementary demand for grants which Lafenwa and Gberevbie (2007) noted function as a catalyst for sustainable democratic governance. The individuals who make up the legislature argue that the institution's responsibilities include control over public funds and taxation for the provision of a good life for the entire citizenry. In most cases, the financial function of the legislature is subsumed into its lawmaking mandate. For instance, Section 80 grants the National Assembly the power of the purse which in different times, is expressed through stipulated legislative procedure.

**e) Committee function:** Committees are usually appointed by the legislature to carry out tasks and responsibilities. Fashagba (2010) states that these bodies should have a clearly defined mission and direction. Committee functions are central to the legislative process and play a

crucial role in the legislature. They review the financial demands of the government and the various ministries and agencies. According to Abonyi (2006), legislative committees function in a manner that depicts carrying out the investigative power of the legislature. There are standing committees that are composed of members of the legislature. These committees can be utilized for various purposes, such as emergencies.

Some scholars believe that the legislature has real power over various decision-making processes. Others see it as a mere rubber stamp assembly that approves the decisions made by other governments. Some note that the abdication of Parliament's responsibility to fulfill other interests. In a general study of the working of the legislature in the modern era, Ray (2004) argues that it has declined in some important areas, such as the powers granted to governments. To illustrate, Abonyi (2006) recorded that in the Second Republic, members of the House of Representatives spent considerable time on various issues, such as accommodation, salaries, and perks. If their demands were not met, they would boycott sittings indefinitely. The apparent decline in legislative branch capabilities has been the subject of many state government reformers' complaints. Nevertheless, the prime place of the legislature in the organization of truly democratic governance cannot be overemphasized.

## **2.2. The Committee System in the Legislature**

According to the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs [NDI] (1996), Dan Azumi (2019), and Abiola (2018), democratic legislatures rely on committees to conduct their business, and committees are referred to as commissions for this purpose. Legislative committees, according to the United Nations Development Programme [UNDP] (2005), are organizational units within a legislative chamber that allow groups of representatives to review policy matters or proposed bills more closely than the entire chamber. Thus, committees or

commissions are small groups of legislators who are assigned, either temporarily or permanently, to investigate issues more thoroughly than the full chamber could (Abiola, 2018, personal communication). Implicitly, Committees help the legislature to establish issues and address problem areas to make the necessary improvements or changes to create an effective process. This assertion about legislative committees may have prompted Ojagbohunmi (2006)'s position to the effect that where the assembly would otherwise not have had enough time to carry out certain responsibilities, committees are delegated to perform such tasks for the parent body more closely and in a detailed manner. Consequently, the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, CFRN (1999, as amended, Section 62 (1)) stated inter alia that

The Senate or the House of Representatives may appoint a committee of its members for such special or general purpose as in its opinion would be better regulated and managed by means of such a committee, and may by resolution, regulation or otherwise, as it thinks fit, delegate any functions exercisable by it to any such committee.

The Constitutional provision above buttresses the stipulation of Section 60 of the CFRN 1999 (as amended) which allows the Houses to regulate their respective procedures. In the National Assembly, Committees are sub-division of members into sub-working groups to enhance the performance of the legislature. In broad terms, the committee system is designed to; promote legislative efficiency and effectiveness, make a detailed examination of Bills and other legislative assignments, provide for legislative oversight of the Executive Branch of Government and other matters related therein, summon any person to appear before them to give evidence under oath or affirmation, or to produce documents, compel the compliance by any person or institution to comply with a summons or a request for a report, receive petitions, representations or submissions from any interested persons or institutions, sits notwithstanding any adjournment of the House, and, promote public participation in the legislative process through a public

hearing, interactive sessions, and investigations among others. Legislatures are found to divide their workload among smaller subunits called committees or commissions. To this end, Martorano(2008) alluded that empirical studies have demonstrated that the committee system impacts the legislative process itself and the public policies formed via this process significantly. Therefore, Heitshusen (2011) posited that in the United States of America,

Congress divides its legislative, oversight, and internal administrative tasks among more than 200 committees and subcommittees. It is important to state that within assigned areas, these subunits gather information; compare and evaluate legislative alternatives; identify policy problems and propose solutions, select, determine, and report measures for full chamber consideration; monitor executive branch performance (oversight); and investigate allegations of wrongdoing (Heitshusen, 2011, p. 1).

From the above, Heitshusen describes committees as subunits which in fact,isin recognition that the composition of any legislative house is invariably rather large and would, therefore, not be able to examine effectively and efficiently in any meaningful detail the many bills and other matters that are presented to it.On this ground, legislative committees are set up to get the basic work of the legislature done. In perspective, the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria [CFRN] 1999 (as altered), thus, provides that “the number of members of a committee appointed under this section, their terms of office and quorum shall be fixed by the House appropriating it” (Section 60 (2)). Such committees operate within the framework of the legislature's traditional roles of lawmaking, representation, and oversight (Abegunde, 2016). Legislative committees, for example, are "mini legislatures" where bills are screened and amended, according to Bob O'Donnel (as cited in Omenka, 2008). Omenka concluded as a result that members of the legislature are elected by the people to share the people's views on policy issues, negotiate, and produce responsive legislation. Section 4 (1) of the CFRN 1999 (as amended) alluded to this

power when it stated that the Federation's legislative powers would be vested in a National Assembly comprised of a Senate and a House of Representatives.

Citizens expect the legislator to meet certain demands emanating from their constituencies in the context of representation, having perceived the legislator to be obligated to electorates. These needs could be for information, services, or public goods. Riggs (1975) classified representatives' representational activities into expressive and intermediary functions. According to Riggs, the expressive intermediary representational functions entail expressing the public's thoughts on issues of public concern and lobbying government bureaucrats on behalf of the constituency. The latter is especially true because citizens believe legislators have access to government departments and members who are unquestionably superior to them. The provisions of Sections 48 and 49 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria [CFRN] (as altered) lend credence to this argument. These stipulations were expressly worded to carefully portray the National Assembly's representative nature based on agreed-upon criteria. Without a doubt, the United Nations Development Programmes [UNDP] and the Inter-Parliamentary Union [IPU] (2012) noted about a legislator's representative activity that constituency service encompasses support to individuals, grievance-chasing, policy responsiveness, and project work. Indeed, the UNDP and IPU's (2012) classification of a legislator's representative functions/services corresponds, in part or whole, to Riggs' classification of representational activity (1975).

### **2.3. The Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs Performance, and the Niger Delta Development Question**

The committee system of organizing the legislature predates recent history. As a result, Dan-Azumii (2019) argued that legislatures depend on committees to organize their businesses. In the same vein, Fashagba (2009) alluded that every legislative assembly in the world has a tradition

of dividing the entire house into smaller units, with each unit carrying a specific responsibility. The division of the entire house into smaller units has the primary goal of increasing efficiency in the assembly's legislative and other related roles. This may be the underlying reason for the committee system's utility in virtually all forms of liberal representative democracy, as well as in authoritarian regimes. The relevance of the legislative committees, therefore, may have inspired its inclusion in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as altered). Specifically, Sections 62 and 103 provides for the use of legislative committees for any purpose deemed fit by the National Assembly and subnational legislatures respectively.

Following the above, the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs derives its mandate from Order 98(38) of the Senate Standing Orders 2015 (as amended). According to the provision of the Standing Order, the Committee's jurisdiction covers issues bothering on the Niger Delta as well as its agencies like the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC). The Niger Delta plays an integral role in the development of Nigeria. It serves as the revenue driver of the country. However, its people have over the previous decades suffered from government negligence in the development of the region. Due to the dismal performance of the Oil Minerals Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC), persistent poverty and underdevelopment persisted in the Niger Delta region (Ebeku, 2020). Although, the establishment of the Niger Delta Development Commission raised hopes for the people of the region, corruption, and inefficiency in the organization ushered in another phase of disappointment (NDDC, 2006). Therefore, protest, restiveness, and militancy also continued and increased thereby causing an increase in the prices of oil in the international due to the low supply of oil from Nigeria (Ebeku, 2020).

Being a statutory body backed by the laws of the National assembly in 2000 as provided in the NDDC Act 2000, Section 1 (1) and Section 28 (1) of the Act established the agency as a Commission and declares it a body corporate with perpetual succession (Section 1 (2) (a)). Section 2 (1) established a Governing Board for the Commission and sets out its composition. The NDDC Act provides that all appointments into the Board shall be made by the President of Nigeria, subject to the ‘confirmation of the Senate, in consultation with the House of Representatives (section 2 (2) (a). Based on the statutory provisions of the NDDC, its core mandate is to deliver infrastructural and socio-economic developments and environmental sustainability in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria (Ebeku, 2020).

The argument that the Niger Delta Development Commission has been receiving significant sums of money for many years, and that it should have been used to improve the living conditions of the people of the region, has been refuted by both the National assembly and the executive arm of government. The Senate ad-hoc committee on Niger Delta Development Commission (Channels TV, 2020, 23<sup>rd</sup> July) observed that about N1.3 trillion have been spent by the NNDC between 2015 and 2019 which the Committee noted that staff members were paid in unjustifiable allowances. It also observed processes and infractions that were made. Other forms of abuse include the improper use of funds, fraudulent contracts, and the exploitation of staff members. There is a strong accusation against the supervising ministry of Niger Delta Affairs, which is allegedly trying to influence the investigation into the activities of its officials.

#### **2.4. Empirical Review**

Several studies over the years have emphasized the importance of the legislature in ensuring effective governance in any democratic state. However, Nwoba, Ojo, and Tiben (2015) explored how the local government legislature can enhance its functions and powers for rural development

in the country. Using the descriptive survey design and also anchored on the Participative Model of Leadership Style as the theoretical basis for the analysis of the various functions and powers of local government legislature units in Nigeria, findings indicated that the main elements of representative democracy have been jettisoned by the self-centered and self-concerned individuals who are elected to serve the public. Therefore, Nwoba et al suggested that the local government councils should be subjected to a disciplinary committee which should be established to review their activities. Also, the restructuring of the country's constitution should be reviewed to ensure that persons with a good academic background are elected as councilors.

Also, Fatile (2017) investigated the effect of legislative and Executive relations on the formulation and implementation of policies in Lagos State using a mixed-method design. For emphasis, a structured questionnaire was used as the quantitative method tool while direct observation, Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews represented the qualitative method. Fatile demonstrated that the relationship between the legislative and executive branches of government can improve the implementation of government policies. Furthermore, Fatile revealed that the political class exerts excessive influence on the budget and appointment of officials. Therefore, he recommended adherence to the principle of separation of powers as it can help prevent the branches from undermining each other's duties and responsibilities. Besides, Fatile concluded that both the arms of government and the private sector should build on their conflict resolution and management skills to improve their effectiveness.

Going further, Ewuim, Nnamani and Eberinwa (2014) examined the extent to which legislation promotes good governance and sustainable development. Ewuim et al found that every

government is to secure all citizens collectively and willingly for peaceful and meaningful co-existence propelled by law and good government. Hence, Ewuim et al (2014) noted that the extent to which efforts of the state especially human beings are effectively and efficiently galvanized towards productive activities for the best interest of the state and citizens determines good governance. They observed further that, legislation is a product of institutionalized law-making process; it is the most important arsenal from which government derives its laws. However, Ewuim, Nnamani, and Eberinwa opined that the failure of good governance is attributable to the docile state of citizens, especially in developing and underdeveloped countries. Nonetheless, Ewuim, Nnamani, and Eberinwa (2014) reported that legislation has assumed an enviable position in the governance of contemporary societies such that it can be used to exclude any law emanating from any other source including perceived or real but wrongful interpretation of any legislation.

The role of the legislature in the anti-corruption initiatives of the government of Nigeria is critical. This rightly underscores its oversight mandate as expressed in Section 88 of the Constitution. Therefore, Mojeed and Joseph (2010) showed that the legislature has performed its constitutional duties fairly. However, Mojeed and Joseph found a wide gap between the political realities and the constitutional prescriptions in a country where the legislature itself is confronted by the mirage of challenges. On this note, Mojeed and Joseph averred that the powers granted to the National Assembly under Section 88(2)(b) are exercisable only if they are used to expose corruption, waste, or inefficiency in the execution of laws and the management of funds. As a result, Igwe-omoke, Abdullahi, and Charles (2020) examined the legislative oversight effect on Nigeria Army's budget implementation.

Igwe-Omoke et al (2020) revealed that the military conducts legislative oversight annually. It also noted that the evaluation of the functions carried out by the military has increased significantly. Therefore, they also found that the reports on the implementation of the annual budget of the Nigerian Army have not been forwarded to the Budget Office of the Federation. Consequently, Igwe-omoke, Abdullahi, and Charles (2020) noted that the legislative oversight provided the necessary framework for the implementation of the Armed Forces' budget which is done through virement. Afterward, Igwe-Omoke et al recommended that the legislative committees on the army should continue to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the institution's budget implementation to improve the level of budget implementation within the force. The committees on the army should always publish reports and recommendations made by them to the Budget Office of the Federation and the Nigerian Army to ensure that the projects and programmes of the army are completed according to the budget.

Emphasizing the role of legislative oversight in curbing excesses by agencies, Nwagwu (2014) examined the activities of the legislature on its legislative oversight functions and its effectiveness in ensuring and sustaining good governance in Nigeria. Nwagwu established that legislative oversight is a mechanism institutionalized to checkmate the excesses of the executive arm of government and government agencies to curb waste in governance, corruption, and absolutism in the exercise of political power. Nwagwu (2014), however, noted that legislative oversight, a critical aspect of the functions of the legislature other than lawmaking, have been severally compromised and often misused as a hunting dog. Therefore, Nwagwu averred that inasmuch as the essence of legislative oversight in a democratic dispensation needs not to be overemphasized, the legislature has reduced this all-important function to mere alarm mechanism being used to blackmail or witch-hunt political opponents, extortion of money from the

parastatals, and ministries under its supervision for selfish or personal aggrandizement. Based on the foregoing, Nwagwu recommended that as a watchdog on the executive and its agencies, legislative oversight should be strengthened with necessary laws to ensure its effectiveness.

Besides, Nwogwugwu and Ishola (2019) explored the dynamics of the oversight functions of Legislators in the policy implementation process in Nigerian noting that the interference by certain individuals and political parties hindered the legislative process. The Finding may have prompted the study by Atakpa, Udoms, Titua, and Akpan (2020). According to Atakpa et al (2020) in their expose on the war against corruption, examined the role of Nigeria's Eight National Assembly (2015-2018). This was mainly due to the various controversies surrounding the legislative arm of government, which was supposed to support and enable the fight against corruption. Atapka et al recorded that critics of the arm had accused it of deliberately working against the president's efforts in the fight against graft. In support of this popular opinion, Atakpa et al (2020) revealed that the Assembly acted in a way that helped the flourishing of corruption in the country. They also noted that the legislature should pass the Special Crimes courts bill and other anti-corruption bills to enable the speedy trial of economic and financial crimes.

Finally, restating the prime place of legislative oversight in ensuring probity in governance, Onyango (2019) explored the effectiveness of local government's legislative oversight when implementing policies and reforms in untried political contexts. Onyango found that the link between legislative oversight and the policy-implementation processes is seldom studied. Thus, collective action problems as noted by Onyango (2019) have often led to the formation of equivocal institutional relationships and the poor role of legislative activities in addressing systemic issues.

## **2.5. Gap in knowledge**

The relevance of legislative performance has grown in recent years. However, the measurement of the concept has remained widely scanty in literature. Although the performance of the legislature cut across representation, legislative and oversight functions, various researchers have continued to explore the comprehensive means by which legislative performance can be measured. There has been a growing recognition that legislative performance is an integral part of governance. This is evidenced in the various studies that have been reviewed. The purpose of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs is to oversee all matters relating to the Niger Delta and its affiliate agencies like the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC). Nevertheless, none of the studies reviewed were delimited to the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Senate much less the Senate Committee on Niger Delta thus, constituting a gap in the literature of legislative oversight. As a result, this study assessed the activities of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta and how it affects the people of the Niger Delta Region to bridge the knowledge gap and improve the oversight debate.

## **2.6. Theoretical Framework-Distributive Committee Theory**

The distributional hypothesis derives its name from the belief that committees exist to enable members to distribute particularistic benefits to their constituency, a belief that is generally supported. Shepsle and Weingast's study had a considerable impact on the formalization of the distributive approach in its present form (Shepsle, 1978; Weingast, 1979; Shepsle & Weingast, 1982). To grasp the distributional theory of legislative organizations, it is necessary to have a firm grasp on several underlying assumptions. The distributive hypothesis is predicated on the premise that legislatures are fundamentally decentralized entities. At the end of the day,

legislators' primary interest is re-election. Logrolling is a frequently employed tactic by politicians to accomplish this purpose. Logrolling is a term that refers to the mutually beneficial exchange of influence on high-profile issues for the legislator's benefit (profits from trade) to help their constituency (Martin & Mickler, 2018). Specialized policies favored by voters in the member's district or so-called pork-barrel projects, colloquially referred to as 'fiscal legislative particularism,' refers to the practice of spending national tax revenues on economically inefficient, geographically targeted projects, are examples of the types of benefits that can be obtained. Legislators accomplish this through a variety of techniques, including selling their votes on issues of lesser importance to their constituents in exchange for votes and influence on issues of greater importance to their constituents.

On the other hand, this presents a conundrum. When all legislators have equal authority in enacting policies and there is no mechanism in place to break this impasse, it is improbable that a majority will form to pursue a certain policy. When there is no clear majority of legislators in favor of a policy and when there is minimal control over the proposal's effective passage, a 'deadlock' is unavoidable. When complex issues must be settled by majority voting, as Black (1948) shows, a stable solution is improbable. In a similar spirit, Arrow (1951) asserted that when simple majority rules are implemented, political outcomes are intrinsically unstable. However, the absence of a method for enforcing logrolling agreements does not create a climate conducive to legislators cooperating to resolve an impasse.

Legislators' log-rolling deals make enforcement difficult. Legislators are concerned about prospective defections as a result of log-rolling and vote to bargain. Supporting a bill in exchange for future support from another politician is a moral hazard. "Public perception of the

situation may change, and the electoral impact of this shift is obvious only to the representative affected," Weingast and Marshall write (1988). Legislators are seeking fresh methods to strengthen their agreements. According to the distributive committee theory, the 'deadlock' problem can be overcome by the legislature's committee structure. Decentralized agenda control is achieved by dividing policy areas into subcommittees, as legislators in Nigeria do in practice. Legislators who are interested in a certain topic can join committees and 'cluster' together, or lobby on behalf of the legislator's interests. Legislators are better positioned to discourage opportunistic behavior and facilitate trade gains when they use the committee system. Individual legislators are permitted to transmit specific policies and spending to their constituents to stabilize the collective legislative instability (Tullock, 1981). Committees, in a slightly different approach, act as a set of standards to ensure that organizations with opposing policy goals can collaborate to pass legislation (Weingast & Marshall, 1988).

The distributive theory of legislative organization assumes that members can select which committees they want to serve on (Shepsle, 1978). Legislative parties provide a secondary and receptive purpose. Because 'committee members' tastes differ systematically from those of the broader legislative body,' committee membership is expected to be highly unrepresentative of its parent body (Krehbiel, 1990). "Legislators from cities dominate urban policy committees; legislators from districts with high demand for construction activity and river and harbor projects dominate pork barrel committees; legislators from poor constituencies dominate welfare committees; and legislators from districts with significant defense contractors or defense installations dominate defense committees" (Shepsle & Weingast, 1982). Importantly, because the committee has the authority to define the agenda in that policy area, the policies that emerge from the legislature are ultimately unrepresentative of the majority's views in the plenary.

Martin (2014) describes this perspective as providing 'parsimonious, but compelling reasons for the stability of the National Assembly. Legislators, according to the distributive committee theory, self-select into committees whose jurisdictions align with their constituencies (Ekor, Katz & Iweala, 2014). As a result, a legislator's major focus is on the topics addressed by the committees to which he/she is elected or appointed. This practice has been considered as majorly dominant in Nigeria's National Assembly where members lobby for committees of interest (Jewell & Patterson, 1966; Keefe & Ogul, 1968). Based on this argument, the theory holds sway in Nigeria's legislative assemblies where members of the parliament exercise their duties effectively such as oversight, representation, and lawmaking.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter discusses the procedure adopted in conducting the study. It describes how data and information would be obtained to answer the research questions raised.

#### **3.1. Research design**

This study adopts the mixed research design. Hence, quantitative and qualitative methods were used in the collection and analysis of data. Therefore, adopting the Collegiate Project Services (CPS) 2006 Eight Model of Committee effective, data obtained using the questionnaire would be taken alongside documentary evidence such as the Sessional Reports of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs and other relevant literature.

#### **3.2. Population of the study**

Polit and Hungler (1999) refer to population as an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects, or members that conform to a set of specifications. The Population for this study is made up of the members and secretariat of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs,

relevant Civil Society Organizations [CSOs] (i.e., Clean foundation, Space for change, Nigeria Network of NGOs [NNGOS], Policy & Legal Advocacy Centre [PLAC], Women's Right Alternative Protection Advancement [WRAPA], Partnership for Justice, Benjamin Legacy foundation, Global Rights, Africa Centre for leadership strategy and Development [Centre LSD], Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre [CISLAC]), the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), and the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs.

Table 3.1: Population

<b>S/NO</b>	<b>POPULATION</b>	<b>QUESTIONNAIRE</b>
1	Members of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs	12
2	Secretariat of the Committee	6
3	CSOs	11
4	Staff of the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs	1032
5	Staff of the NDDC	435
6	Total	1496

### **3.3. Sampling procedure and size**

The purposive sampling procedure was adopted for this study. In other words, this will involve a procedure by which the researcher will examine selected members of the population based on set criteria. Indeed, while the questionnaire and interviews would be administered purposively to members of the population, the content of the Sessional Reports of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Senate

Committee on Niger Delta Affairs would also be relied on. To ensure a balance of information, the sample size was determined using the Taro Yamane's formula as provided below.

$$n = \frac{N}{(1+Ne^2)}$$

Where: n = corrected sample size

$$N = 1496$$

$$e = \text{Margin of Error (MoE)} = 0.05$$

$$\text{Therefore, } n = \frac{1496}{1+1496(0.05^2)}$$

$$= \frac{1496}{1+(1496 \times 0.0025)}$$

$$= \frac{1496}{1+3.74}$$

$$= \frac{1496}{4.74}$$

$$= 315.6 \approx 316$$

The sample size for the administration of the questionnaire is three hundred and sixteen (316).

### **3.4. Sources of data**

This study will accommodate both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data were gotten with the use of questionnaires framed from the Collegiate Project Services (CPS) 2006 Eight Factor Model on Committee Effectiveness. On the other hand, secondary data were sourced from documentary evidence on the activities of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs, as well as books, journal articles, official publications of the National Assembly, newspapers, magazines, and other relevant materials from the internet.

### **3.5. Research instruments**

The research instruments that were used for this study are questionnaires and the Sessional Reports of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs. The sessional reports are those prepared from 2011 to 2019. The choice of these instruments is deliberate because of the quality of information desired by the study.

### **3.6. Method of data analysis and presentation**

The qualitative method which emphasizes the textual representation of data and the quantitative method of representing data in numerals were adopted for the analysis of data. Therefore, while the content analysis was used in examining the open-ended questions on the questionnaire and Sessional Reports of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs, government gazettes, and other relevant literature, simple descriptive statistics were adopted in presenting quantitative data.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter covers the presentation, analysis, and discussion of the data that were collected in the field. Out of the three hundred and sixteen (316) questionnaires that were administered, three hundred and six (306) were returned and filled. The questionnaires were administered to the population as outlined in Section 3.3. The presentation, analysis, and discussion of data were done according to the objectives of the study outlined in chapter one.

#### **4.1. Social demography**

##### **Age Bracket**

The age distribution of a population is a vital component of the social demography of a study.

Thus, the age bracket of the study population is shown in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1: Age Distribution**

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-28	71	21.9	21.9	21.9
	29-39	159	53.3	53.3	75.2
	40-50	50	15.7	15.7	90.9
	51 AND ABOVE	25	9.1	9.1	100.0
	Total	306	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, February 2022.

From the Table above, the frequencies for the age brackets 18-28, 29-39, 40-50, and, 51 and above are represented by 71 (21.9%), 159 (53.3%), 50 (15.7%), and 25 (9.1%) respectively. The high frequency of age bracket 29-39 shows the youthful outlook of the target population.

## Gender

The Table below shows the gender distribution of the population.

**Table 4.2: Gender Distribution**

Variables		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MALE	155	50.8	50.8	50.8
	FEMALE	151	49.2	49.2	100.0
	Total	306	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, February 2022.

From the Table above, the population is made up of one hundred and fifty-five (155), 50.8% males, and one hundred and fifty-one (151), 49.2% females. Based on the data, the gender distribution of the population is equitable however, the fairly high number of male respondents is attributable to the inequitable distribution of socio-economic opportunities between the girl and boy children in Nigeria.

### **Educational Qualification**

As a part of the social demography of the study area, Table 4.3 presents the respondent's level of education.

**Table 4.3: Level of Education**

Variables	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
SSCE	34	9.1	9.1	9.1
OND/HND	56	19.4	19.4	28.5
BSc/BEng/BEd/BA	120	39.5	39.5	68.0
POSTGRADUATE	96	32.0	32.0	100.0
Total	306	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork, February 2022.

Table 4.3 shows that 34 (9.1%) of the respondents are holders of Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) certificates, 56 (19.4%) are OND/HND Certificate holders, 120 (39.5%) are holders of various Bachelor's degrees, while 96 (32.0%) have postgraduate degrees. The

literate composition of the study area may be due to the educational demand of working within the precinct of the highlighted population.

#### **4.2. Performance of the oversight functions by the Senate Committee on Niger Delta between 2011-2019**

Following the provision of Section 62 of the 1999 Constitution (as altered) that permits the Houses to appoint committees for purposes they deem fit, Order 98(38) of the Senate Standing Orders 2015 (as amended) provided for the establishment of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs. Among other things, the committee is expected to oversee the activities of the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs, the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), the Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP), and so on. Based on this statutory mandate, the committee's centrality in ensuring good governance in the Niger Delta region, therefore, connotes an appraisal of its performance within the ambit of the traditional functions of the legislature. Within this context, it must be asserted that Order 102 (1)(b) of the 2015 Senate Standing Rule (as amended) permits committees to conduct investigations as they may consider necessary.

However, using the CPS' 8-Factor model, a majority of the respondents (i.e. 75.6%) stated that the committee achieved successes and has shown progress toward its measurable goals; 59.0% of the 57 respondents the questionnaire were administered alluded that all (or most) committee members are committed to the committee goals; 80.6% of the respondents noted that indeed, the committee members agree on what the committee is currently focusing its efforts. By this, it means that committee activities are tailored toward achieving set targets and the committee focuses on such targets per time. Going further, 69.4% of the respondents opined that the committee uses formal processes for meetings, group decision making, group problem solving,

and conflict reduction. This is profoundly expressed in the Standing Order of the Senate on the conduct of its committees.

Nevertheless, while 78.1% of the respondents argued that the committee has good internal communication (ground rules, open communication, trust), 62.4% of them others posited that the committee has good external communication (e.g., the committee develops and implements a communication plan for various stakeholders). Rightly, as would be shown in the course of this discussion, there are stipulated procedures already stated in the rules of the Senate on official communications. Also, 100.0% of the respondents noted that in terms of leadership sharing, all members of the committee pitch in and do their fair share. Besides, on leadership support, 99.0% of the respondents disclosed that the committee receives the support it needs to be successful. Finally, 81.0% of respondents alluded that the committee is adequately structured to accomplish its goals. A summary of these responses is provided in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: 8-Factor Model Committee Diagnosis

<b>S/N</b>	<b>8-FACTOR ATTRIBUTES</b>	<b>VARIABLES</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE (%)</b>
1	Results	Excellent Results	29.4
		Good Result	46.2
		Minor Results	15.3
		No Results	9.1
2	Ownership/Morale	High ownership	25.7
		Ownership	33.3
		Some ownership	30.5

		No ownership	10.5
3	Focus	Highly focused	37.8
		Focused	42.8
		Unclearly focused	19.4
		Not focused	
4	Team Processes	Excellent processes	24.6
		Good processes	44.8
		Emerging processes	18.0
		Poor team processes	12.6
5	Communication (Internal)	Good communication	35.7
		Emerging communication	42.4
		Cautious communication	21.9
		Poor communication	
6	Communication (External)	Good communication	26.7
		Emerging communication	35.7
		Cautious communication	37.6
		Poor communication	
7	Leadership Sharing	Shared leadership	47.3
		Emerging leadership sharing	52.7
		Cautious leadership sharing	
		No leadership shared	
8	Leadership Support	Strong support	46.4
		Increasing support	52.6

		Minimal support	1.0
		No support	
9	Structure	Effectively structured	46.8
		Somewhat structured	34.2
		Partially structured	19.0
		Poorly structured	

Source: Fieldwork, February 2022.

The above, notwithstanding, the performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta within the context of the traditional functions of the legislature being lawmaking, representation, and oversight is captured in Table 4.5. The Table provides a summary of the activities of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs covering the areas of lawmaking, oversight, and representation.

Table 4.5: Summary of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Activities

S/N	LEGISLATIVE ROLE	ACTIVITY
<b>7<sup>TH</sup> SENATE</b>		
1	Oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee screened 17 Presidential nominees for the Governing Board of the Niger Delta Development Commission and made recommendations to the Senate. The recommendations were approved and the nominees were confirmed.</li> <li>• The Committee embarked on oversight visits of projects in six states of the Niger Delta region, namely: Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta, and Abia. Through the oversight inspection of projects, the Committee was able to discover some abandoned projects and made a case for their resuscitation. Some of the project sites visited were:</li> </ul>

		<p>a) Igbiri-Abam-Abibo-Oba Link Road /Bridges in Rivers State</p> <p>b) East-West Road (Section 2) ie Port Harcourt-Ahoadia and Ahoadia-Kaiama</p> <p>c) Buguma-Ido-Abalama-Degema Road in Rivers State</p> <p>d) East-West Sampour-Odoni-Osekwenike-Elemebiri Road in Bayelsa State</p> <p>e) Sagbama-Tungbo Bolou-Orua Angiama-Ebedegbiri-Toru-Angalabiri road in Bayelsa State</p> <p>f) East-west Road section 1 ie Warri-Kaiama</p> <p>g) Uzere Patani Road in Delta State</p> <p>h) Gberegolor-Gbekebor-Ogulagha Road (Phase 1) with bridges in Delta State</p> <p>i) Oghey-Koko- Escravos Road in Delta state</p> <p>j) Nsagak Junction –Akon Road in Akwa Ibom State</p> <p>k) NDDC Prototype Hostel at University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State</p> <p>l) Eket –Ibena Road in Akwa Ibom State</p> <p>m) Iko - Atabrikang Akata - Opolom-Okoroutip - Iwuchang Road in Akwa Ibom State</p> <p>n) Mbikpong Ekpo – Mbiokporo Road in Akwa Ibom State</p> <p>o) Obiza – Asa Township Road Phase II in Abia State</p> <p>p) Prototype University Hostel at Micheal Okpara University, Umudike in Abia State</p> <p>q) Ihube – Nkwoagu-Mbala Road in Abia State</p> <p>r) Uzoukwu-Owaza-Iguruta Road in Abia State.</p> <p>s) Obuohia-Uhuru-Ohanku-Aba Road in Abia state</p> <p>t) Iko-Atabrikang-Iwuoachang Road (Phase II) Cross Rivers State.</p> <p>u) Student Hostel at Cross Rivers State University of Technology, Calabar.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee set up a sub-committee to interface between NDDC and the contractor of one of the abandoned projects:- Eket-Ibena road. This made the contractors go back to the site. Nevertheless, Governor Udom Emmanuel posited that Akwa Ibom State government spent N26 Billion Naira of the same road hence, raising a question on the effectiveness of the oversight visit (Premium Times Nigeria, 2021, June 14<sup>th</sup>).</li> </ul>
2	Lawmaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within the period under review, the Committee processed the budget estimates of the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs created on the 10<sup>th</sup> of September 2008 for years 2011 and 2012, NDDC budget estimates for the year 2012, and the Federal Government Amnesty Program budget estimates for the year 2012 and made recommendations to the Senate. The recommendations were</li> </ul>

		<p>considered and approved by the Senate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration of the motion on the United Nations Recommended FGN-Shell Fund for Clean-up of Oil Spills in the Ogoni Land. This was a motion referred to Senate Committees on Niger Delta, Petroleum (Upstream), and Environment and Ecology. Evidently, The report of the environmental assessment of Ogoniland by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) was published in 2011 and in 2016, the Hydrocarbon Pollution Remediation Project (HYPREP) was set up with the mandate to remediate the environment and restore the livelihood of the people.</li> </ul>
3	Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee had meetings with the Ex-militants in their various training Centres and assessed the impact of the Amnesty programme on them. During these meetings, the Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP) office made the following observations</li> </ul> <p>The Amnesty office made the following submissions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. that so many youths especially the Itsekiris who laid down their arms when amnesty was declared, but were not registered in the amnesty programme, were agitating to be part of the programme.</li> <li>b. That Federal Ministries in their various developmental agenda were not considering the Niger Delta region as part of their responsibilities, rather, they chose to leave it entirely to the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs.</li> <li>c. That the Amnesty programme was underfunded, otherwise, it should be able to establish training centres within the country to reduce capital flight incurred through foreign training for ex-militants.</li> <li>d. That the carbotage law and the Local Content law should be enforced to provide openings for the trained ex-militants to be absorbed into the workforce of the nation.</li> </ol>
<b>8<sup>TH</sup> SENATE</b>		
1	Oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During the period covered by its 2019 report, the Committee embarked on an oversight inspection of some projects to ascertain the implementation of approved budgets for the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) in seven states of the Niger Delta region namely: Rivers, Bayelsa, Cross River, Akwa Ibom, Abia, Delta, and Imo states.</li> <li>• The Committee visited some projects embarked upon by the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs. The projects visited were:</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• East-West road (Section 1)-Warri-Kaiama which was awarded to SETRACO for N120.8b covering 87 kilometers. The road has been completed and commissioned.</li> <li>• One block of six classrooms at Eruemukohwaren, Ughelli North LGA, Delta State.</li> <li>• Skill Acquisition Centre at Tuomo, Burutu LGA, Delta State.</li> <li>• East-West Road (Section 111) Port Harcourt-Eket (Rivers-Akwa Ibom State).</li> <li>• Overall, the Minister of Niger Delta Affairs, Senator Godswill Akpabio stated that since his assumption of office, he has been able to scale up the completion of section i-iv of the east-west road from 8% to 80% (Vanguard Nigeria, 2022, March 31<sup>st</sup>).</li> </ul>
2	Lawmaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To enhance the funding capacity of the Commission, it is, therefore, noteworthy to say that the continuous intervention by the National Assembly resulted in the passage of the NDDC (Amendment) Act 2018. The immediate benefit of the Act is that the Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas company (NLNG) which had not contributed to the funding of NDDC is now an active contributor. There is also an increase in the revenue projections from the oil companies.</li> <li>• Monumental Challenges Facing the Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP) due to Paucity of Funds.</li> <li>• Urgent Need to complete the East/West Road, especially the Section along Aba/Elem Road Junction to Onne Road Junction.</li> <li>• Motion on Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and Niger Delta Development</li> <li>• Joint Motion on gas flaring in Nigeria, especially in the Niger Delta region.</li> <li>• Urgent Need to Investigate the Amnesty Programme in the Niger Delta Region.</li> <li>• Review of the Niger Delta Development Commission (Establishment, etc.) Act, 2000.</li> </ul> <p>Also, within the period under review, the Committee had the following referrals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Confirmation of the Presidential nominees for the Governing Board of Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC). These nominees are yet to be inaugurated (Thisday Live, 2022, March 14<sup>th</sup>).</li> <li>ii. Motion on the United Nations Recommended FGN-Shell Fund for Clean-up of Oil Spills in the Ogoni Land. This was a</li> </ol>

		<p>motion referred to Senate Committees on Niger Delta, Petroleum (Upstream), and Environment and Ecology.</p> <p>iii. Annual Budget Estimates for the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs, the NDDC, and the Amnesty Office.</p>
3	Representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee engaged officials of the Amnesty programme in several interactive and investigative meetings on the activities of the office onshore and offshore.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

Source: Sessional Report, Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs (2015; 2019)

### **4.3. Effects of the activities of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta between 2011-2019 on the people of the Niger Delta region**

The effects of the activities of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta between 2011-2019 are measured along the line of;

**1) Fulfillment of Constitutional Dictate:** The activities of the Senate Committee are constitutionally premised. Therefore, it serves as the fulfillment of a constitutional mandate designed for the peace, order, and good government of the people. Explaining, the National Assembly enjoys the Constitutional legislative powers of the Federation (Section 4). The constitution further granted it powers to regulate its procedure as well as appoint committees for purposes it deems fit (see sections 60 & 62). Based on these provisions of the constitution, the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs is fully empowered to undertake legislative tasks within the pretext of assigned legislative powers. For instance, the Committee undertakes the legislative function of lawmaking viz-a-viz the budget function following the provision of Section 80 of the Constitution (that is the authority over the public purse). The budget allocation to the agencies under the committee’s jurisdiction is stated in Table 4.9.

Table 4.6: Budgetary Allocations between 2011-2019

S/N	MDA	YEAR/AMOUNT (₦)
<b>7<sup>TH</sup> SENATE</b>		
1	Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2011: 55, 207,384,358</li> <li>• 2012: 61, 446,831,424</li> <li>• 2013: 64, 706,473,318</li> <li>• 2014: 51, 693,319,131</li> <li>• 2015: 8,945,684,128</li> </ul>
2	Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2011: 261, 037,690,000</li> <li>• 2012: 249, 844,480,000</li> <li>• 2013: 315, 805,990,000</li> <li>• 2014: 322, 600,000,000</li> </ul>
3	Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2011: 99, 176,411,902</li> <li>• 2012: 66, 176,411,902</li> <li>• 2013: 66, 281,093,786</li> <li>• 2014: 63, 281,093,786</li> <li>• 2015: 63,281,093,786</li> </ul>
<b>8<sup>TH</sup> SENATE</b>		
1	Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2016: 26.3 billion</li> <li>• 2017: 35.9 billion</li> <li>• 2018: 60.3 billion</li> <li>• 2019: 37.4 billion</li> </ul>
2	Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2016: 241.1 billion</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2017: 364.5 billion</li> <li>• 2018: 246.5 billion</li> </ul>
3	Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2016: 20 billion</li> <li>• 2017: 76.7 billion</li> <li>• 2018: 65 billion</li> <li>• 2019: 65 billion</li> </ul>

Source: Sessional Report, Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs (2015; 2019)

Besides the lawmaking powers which were highlighted in Table 4.7 taking into account its budgetary approving powers, the committee undertook oversight tours as already stated in Table 4.6 as well as mediated on issues depicting its representative powers. Overall, the glaring effect of the exercise of the budgetary powers of the committee viz-a-viz fulfillment of the constitutional mandate of powers over public funds is represented in Table 4.7 as it highlights specific projects undertaken with approved funds and their status of completion within the legislative tenures under review. These projects are designed to serve the good people of the Niger Delta region.

Table 4.7: NDDC Project Inspection Summary

S/N	PROJECT	YEAR OF AWARD	AWARD SUM	COMMITMENT	CONTRACTOR	STATUS
1	Construction of NDR Specialist Hospital (Cardiovascular) Port Harcourt	April 2012	N791, 729,412.69	N118, 759,411.90	MX MX Huges Limited	Completed
2	Construction of NDDC. River State Office. Rivers C. Rivers State	April. 2012	N992, 821,595.67	N63, 288,185.01	Komess Resources Nig. Ltd	Completed
3	Construction of Prototype University Hostel at Uni Port Choba. Rivers State	April 2012	N1, 369,090,667.25	N503, 317,811.38	Fezinat Services LTD	Completed
4	Construction of Nigerian Police Barracks (Special Protection Unit) Base 6 Lots 1 (Admin Block) Rivers State	May, 2012	N249, 910,500	N37, 486,575	Amville System Nigeria LTD	Completed
5	Construction of Nigerian Police	May 2012	N249, 750,000	N 37,462,500	Rhinoshields Ltd	Completed

	Barracks (Special Protection Unit) Base 6 Lots 2 (Residential Block A) Rivers State					
6	Construction of Nigerian Police Barracks (Special Protection Unit) Base 6 Lots 3 (Residential Block B) Rivers State	May 2012	N249,750,000	N37,462,623.75	Cafadaga Venture Nig. Ltd	Completed
7	Construction of Nigerian Police Barracks (Special Protection Unit) Base 6 Lots 4 (Residential Block) River State	May 2012	N249,750,000	N37,462,500	Makricky Nig. Ltd	Completed
8	Construction of Nigerian Police Barracks (Special Protection Unit) Base 6 Lots 5 (residential Block) Rivers	May 2012	N249,750,000	N37,462,500	Anestony Construction Ltd	Completed

	State					
9	Construction of Nigerian Police Barracks (Special Protection Unit) Base 6 Lots 6 (General External works) Rivers State	May 2012	N249,750,825	N37,462,623.75	CEC Civil Engineering Co. Ltd	Completed
10	Construction of NDDC new corporate Headquarters Building, Rivers State	1994	N4,949,733,797.40		Messrs Eylon Meromi	Completed
11	Construction of Igbiri-Abam-Abibo-Oba Link Road, River State	Nov. 2009	N2,985,708,705.22	N447,856,305.78	Madmoselie Nig. Ltd	Completed
12	Construction of Borokiri Okirika Road and Bridge at Okirika, River State	April 2012	N16,787,393,981.88		Zerock Const. Ltd	Completed
13	Construction of Sandfilling and shore protection of Ogu Town	June 2007	N12,014,341,090.58	N11,406,988,119	Roudo Nig. Ltd	Completed

	Community in Ogu/Bolo River State.					
14	Construction of Kaa-Ataba road and Bridges River State	Nov. 2009	N10,930,414,996.45	N1,639,562,249.47	Atafrank Nig. Ltd	Abandoned
15	Construction of Kira Dere Mogho road and Bridge Gokana, Rivers State	Sept. 2012	N2,474,519,928.20	N371,177,989.20	Southside Const. Ltd	Completed
<b>AKWA IBOM STATE</b>						
16	Construction of Access Road at the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital Akwa Ibom State	June 2014	N197,400,566.00	N197,400,566.00	Messrs Basest Engineering LTD	Completed
17	Construction of NDDC Prototype Hostel at UNI Uyo Teaching Hospital, Akwa Ibom State	Dec. 2012	N1,283,179,348.20	N1,283,179,348.20	Messrs Basestar Engineering Limited	Completed
18	Construction of Ididep-Ekpeyong – Ikot Etim Afha Itiat Road, Akwa	April 2012	N2,587,086,259.00	N	Messrs Cafmeg Construction Eng. Ltd	Completed

	Ibom State					
19	Construction of Nsasak Junction –Akon Road in Akwa Ibom State	April 2012	N5, 819,165,840.52		Messrs Seyang Ltd	Completed
<b>ABIA STATE</b>						
20	Construction of Inter State Road along Ozara/Acha-Ivo Road Abia State	April 2012	N3, 480,857,061.00	N1, 500,000,000	Cosmobuilt Nig. Ltd	Completed
21	Construction of Umuwanwa-Obizi Road	April 2012	N811, 927,902.50		Zerock Construction Ltd	Abandoned
22	Construction of Ihie Ukwu Road Network	April 2012	N1, 967,699,553.75		Oneplus Holding Nig Ltd	Abandoned
23	Construction of Obohia-Ohanku-Aba Road with Spur to Ohambele Obeaku	Nov. 2009	N2, 080,262,907.19	N400, 000,000	Herbertech Nig. Limited	Completed
24	Construction of Umunteke Junction – Mkprobe Obegu Ihie Road Abia State.	April 2012	N2, 800,000,000.00	N420, 000,000	Agilaire Engineering Solution Limited	Abandoned

IMO STATE						
25	Construction of Isinweke – Onicha Uboma – Imo River Umuahia Express Road in Imo / Abia State	April 2012	N5, 603,357,408.00	N1,961,175,092.80	Deahyun Nigeria LTD	Completed
26	Construction of Umuachi Umunze1 Umude- Umunakanu Road/Bridge Imo State	June 2012	N2, 036,136,650.00	N1,375,191,287.51	Silverbrook Investment LTD	Completed
27	Construction of 2X15MVA Injection Substation & 33/11 KV Transmission at Ikem Communities, Ngor Okpala LGA, Imo State.	June, 2012	N1, 081,218,231.83	N150, 000,000	Ginscon Const. Company.	Completed
28	Reclamation /Shore Protection of Opuma, Imo State.	Nov. 2009	N4, 878,921,078.29			Abandoned

29	Construction of Ukwugba Junction Egbema Etekwuru Umuapu Road, Imo State.	Nov. 2009	N2,549,620,908.06	N1,542,062,412.92	Enerco Nig. LTD	Completed
30	Construction of Obokofia Internal Roads and Drains, Imo State.	April 2012	N2,667,805,051.38	N2,134,244,041.10	Oki & Sons Nig. LTD	Completed
31	Construction of Umudike Internal Road/Drainage, Imo State.	April 2012	N1,403,027,437.61	N210,454,115.64	Messrs Building Investment Nig LTD	Abandoned
32	Dualisation of PH/Owerri Road – Avu-Adapalm-Etekwuru Road, Imo State.	April 2012	N6,448,062,762.49	N967,209,414.37	Hado Nig. LTD	Ongoing
<b>BAYELSA STATE</b>						
33	Construction of Akenfa –Gbaran Bridge	Nov. 2009	N800,993,396.31	N400,000,000	Anta Engineering LTD	Completed
34	Construction of NDDC prototype University Hostels NDU, Amassoma	Dec. 2004	N427,000,000.00 N786,886,932.70 N1,		First Marine Engr. Services LTD	Completed

			453,084,452.30			
35	Construction of NDDC prototype University Hostels NDU, Amassoma	Dec. 2004	N427,000,000.00 N793,231,936.20 N1,665,150,765.00		Broadbase Engr. Contracting LTD	Completed
36	Construction of Ogbia –Nembe Road/Bridges, Bayelsa State.	Feb. 2006	N9,667,781,300.00 N24,421,857,276.16	N18,297,790,854.58	Setraco Nig. Limited	Completed
37	Construction of Internal Roads for Federal University Otuoke	April 2012	N4,625,666,015.00		OnePlus Holdings Nig. LTD	Completed

Source: Sessional Report Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs (2019)

Table 4.8 is exemplary of the outcome of the effects of the fulfillment of the constitutional mandate vested on the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs. Explicitly, in exercising its lawmaking role (budgetary function), the committee made approvals for the above-listed infrastructural intervention in the Niger Delta region. Although Abia state tops the list of most abandoned projects, the succor provided by each of the projects cannot be overstated.

**2) Delivery of Good Governance:** The essence of government is for the good of the people. In fact, Section 14 (2) states that the primary purpose of government is for the security and welfare of the people. Therefore, if the government's primary purpose is for the welfare of the people, then the activities of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs must be geared towards fulfilling the constitutional mandate. Within the sphere of the committee's influence (that is the activity of oversight, lawmaking, and representation), the interest of the residents of the Niger Delta region must hold sway. According to the Sessional Report, Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs (2015), "in all the areas visited, the Committee noted the socio-economic importance of projects to the affected communities and the people of the state. These projects have impacted positively on the benefiting communities and engendered development in those areas". That is to say that with the committee's prudent allocation of resources in discharging its budgetary powers, good governance which is at the core of the provision of Section 14 (2) of the constitution becomes entrenched. Explicitly, the Sessional Report, Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs (2015) stated that on the committee's visit to ex-militants to African Union Aviation academy at Mafikeng, South Africa where 35 ex-militants, (both men and women), were trained as pilots, and Flight Training Service Centre at Midrand Airport in South Africa where 19 ex-militants were also trained as pilots, Committee members flew in the aircraft piloted by the trained ex-agitators to assess their confidence and

competence levels as they watched some of the students being called out for decoration and handling out of wings and certificates.

**3) Checks Corruption in the Execution of Legislative Approved Budget:** No doubt, Nigeria's constitutional design permits for checks and balances which is based on the principle of separation of powers. With this concept, governmental powers are delineated between arms of government, viz: the lawmaking legislature, an executing executive, and the adjudicating judiciary (see Sections 4, 5, & 6). Based on this, the legislature enjoys the unfettered powers in ensuring the execution of government programmes and policies according to legislative intent. As a result, the subdivision of the legislative house (committees) undertakes the tasks of overseeing agencies of government on behalf of the assembly. Among other things, this is meant to check corruption and further enhance the prospects of good governance. Apart from exposing corruption, the Committee acts in ways that would enhance the performance of MDAs under its jurisdiction. For instance, during one of its visits, the Sessional Report, Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs (2019) recorded that during the committee's routine inspection of

one block of six classrooms at Eruemukohwaren, Ughelli North LGA, Delta state.

skill acquisition centre at Tuomo, Burutu LGA, Delta State.

east-west road (section 111) Port Harcourt-Eket (Rivers-Akwa Ibom states).

The committee expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of work done and directed that the contractors return to the site to ensure that the money paid for the projects was judiciously utilized.

Overall, this act of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs enhances good governance by checking corruption through the mechanism of oversight.

#### 4.4. Obstacles to the effective performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta

The performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs is subject to several factors which in most cases, culminate in obstacles. Based on the analysis of the content of the Sessional Reports of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Senate Committees on Niger Delta Affairs as well as different kinds of literature, this study identifies the following as obstacles to the effectiveness of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs.

- 1) **Inadequate resources:** Resource constraints can hinder the progress of the parliament. Since parliaments (National Assembly) depend on the subdivision of its members to carry out their business, the inadequacy of resources (financial and material), will negatively impact parliamentary work at the committee level. The parliament mirrors the effectiveness of its committee. Indeed, the oversight powers accorded to committees regardless, without the needed resources to carry out its daily activities of acquiring stationaries, provision of logistics, etc., not much would be done in the face of such enormous oversight powers. In fact, the Sessional Report, Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs (2015; 2019) captured this when it stated that “The fund available for Committee activities is grossly inadequate”. Further decrying the inadequacy of resources in the conduct of the Committee’s activities, the Sessional Report averred further that “the lack of Committee utility vehicles makes it difficult for committees to embark on instant oversight visits”. This is so because an application has to be made for the release of vehicles and this depends on availability. In addition, the Sessional Report, Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs (2015) noted specifically the obstacle posed by the lack of facilities and internet services impairs instant research on legislative proposals.

## 2) **Relations between the Committee and Ministries, Departments, and Agencies**

**(MDAs):** According to the World Bank (2007), without clearly defined guidelines, a clear understanding of the mandate of the committee, and without well-established channels of communication, managing the relationship with government MDAs can be a daunting task, especially where the rules of engagement and committees' oversight role are not well established as pertains in young and emerging democracies. This worry was expressed by Fashagba (2009) when he argued that members of the executives show a 'lackadaisical' attitude towards legislative (committee) summons, misconstruing them as an appendage of the executive. The Sessional Report, Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs (2015) identified this factor when it averred that

Up to date, no amount has been paid from the Ecological fund of the Federation to NDDC for the development of the region as provided in the NDDC Act. Additionally, the Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas Company has not complied by making contributions to NDDC for the development of the region as stated in the NDDC (Establishment) Act 2000. These pose challenges to the Committee.

It could be argued that the committee representing the institution of the legislature should enforce its opinion, however, extant provisions are clear on legislative procedure. For instance, assuming the Senate through a resolution demands the payment of NLNG's contribution to NDDC, since resolutions do not bear the force of law, it may be difficult to enforce. Even if a law is enacted to take care of this, the legislature lacks executing powers as that is solely for the executive through its agencies such as the Police, and many others. The lack of synergy between the committee and agencies of the government could also be seen in the relationship displayed by the Minister of Niger Delta Affairs and members of the House of Representatives Ad-hoc Committee on the probe of the Interim Management of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC).

- 3) **Lack of sincerity of purpose for oversight:** There is often a disagreement in the timing of oversight as reported in the sessional reports of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs (2015; 2019). In most cases, the case of timing may be due to the peculiarity of the Niger Delta terrain. Therefore, when the agencies are willing and ready to allow the Senate Committee to see and assess its projects, the officials of the committee or those of the agency are unavailable even though there are pre oversight visits where the procedure for oversight is agreed to by both parties (Abiola, 2018). Consequently, there is a perceived lack of sincerity of purpose in the pursuit of oversight goals. Indeed, this is one of the challenges militating against the performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs which has resulted in almost a halt of its activities in the present Assembly. This is double-pronged such that the lawmakers (members of the committee) and the relevant agencies harbor ulterior motives in the discharge of legislative duties, especially the oversight process. This situation may have prompted professor Itse Sagay to accuse lawmakers of seeking gratifications before oversight (Vanguard Nigeria, 2019, November 22<sup>nd</sup>). Overall, it must be stated that the concept of oversight is a constitution creation and must be discharged within constitutionally set bounds.
- 4) **Peculiar challenges:** Peculiar could be directed to MDAs under the committee's supervision or the committee itself. For instance, despite the Senate confirming the nominees to the NDDC board forwarded to it by the President, the Commission has been run by an Interim Management Committee (IMC) set up by the Minister of Niger Delta Affairs Senator Godswill Akpabio. Against the provisions of the NDDC Act, the Interim Management Committees/Sole Administrator continues to administer the affairs of the NDDC since October 2019 in breach of the extant laws. While this happened in the present

legislative dispensation, it must be stated that this accounts for the ineffectiveness of the present committee on Niger Delta Affairs. Therefore, applying the principles of separation of powers, connotes that since the National Assembly cannot legislate and execute at the same time, the administration of issues of governance in the Niger Delta region which is for the NDDC for example is often left to appointed administrators. In another demonstration of the spill-over effect of agency-peculiar issues, the Sessional Report, Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs (2015) recorded that most projects are executed the wrong way (away from the provision of the Appropriation Act). To this end, heads of such agencies attempt to evade legislative interfaces, especially oversight deliberately. On the part of the committee, the terrain, as well as the fluid security situation in the Niger Delta region, impedes the performance of the committee. First, it must be stated that the Niger Delta is a vast low-lying region through which the waters of the Niger River drain into the Gulf of Guinea. As a result, there are several waterways through mangroves (called creeks) and habited by criminal elements. This situation raises safety concerns and further dissuades members of the committee from visiting the hinterlands for fear of attacks. Most often, oversight visits are done within major cities.

#### **4.5. Strategies that would mitigate the challenges affecting the effective performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta**

An analysis of literature, as well as processed data, identified the following as strategies that will mitigate the challenges affecting the effective performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs.

- 1) Provision of resources (material and financial):** Resources should be readily available for the committee's activities. Fashagba (2009) as well as the World Bank Group [WBG]

(2007) noted the resource need of parliamentary committees when they argued that committees are expected to fund their oversight activities, committee staff members are required to support the activities of committees, etc. Specifically, committee staff carry out research and communicate with parliamentarians. Therefore, adequate resources should be provided for the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs and agencies under its supervision to ensure the execution of programmes unhindered as well as the reliance of the Committee on MDAs to fund its oversight activities which undermine legislative powers. According to the Sessional Report, Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs (2019), “there should be at least a coaster bus for each Committee as utility vehicle which could be used to visit projects anytime the Committee decides to do so, without having to apply and wait till when there is an approval from the Transport unit”. The Sessional Report, Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs (2015) emphasized the need for adequate funding as it stated that “the Committee needs adequate funding to enable it to execute its programmes effectively”. Going further, the report noted that this would enable the committee to acquire an efficient internet facility.

- 2) **Improved cooperation between Committee and MDAs:** For any meaningful activity by the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs that would impact the residents of the Niger Delta region positively, inclusiveness is key to paving the way for effective performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs. According to Sessional Report, Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs (2019), there is the need for agencies under the purview of the Committee to always involve members of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs in their programmes, projects, activities, and events. Therefore, for the socio-economic improvement of the Niger Delta region, it is pertinent to foremost, identify the

challenges that may constitute a hindrance to efforts put into improving the region as the cooperation between the legislature and relevant agencies is at the core of the implementation of any initiative for the betterment of the niger delta region. Explicitly, such cooperation would engender good resource management and governance culture.

- 3) Dedication to responsibilities:** As much as this issue applies to individuals rather than the respective institutions, being alive to the responsibility to one's office- legislative duties and the administration of the affairs of the Niger Delta region, would help in no small measure in enhancing the effectiveness of the performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs. Truly, a sense of responsibility will make it imperative for the agencies to understand that the activities of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs are germane to their overall improvement of the Niger Delta through specially targeted programmes, activities, and projects. Also, such a sense of responsibility would inspire the urge to embrace the international best practices in the administration of governance issues.

#### **4.6. Discussion of Findings**

This study assessed the performance of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Senate Committees on Niger Delta Affairs. The importance of the study can be gleaned from Nigeria's economic activities which accords a place of pride to crude oil resources. Therefore, using the mixed method, the study collected data from primary and secondary sources to achieve the objectives highlighted in section 1.4. from field and literary evidence gathered, Order 98(38) of the Senate Standing Orders 2015 (as amended) provided for the establishment of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs. The performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta, nevertheless, is within the context of the traditional functions of the legislature being lawmaking, representation, and oversight is captured

in Table 4.6. The Table provides a summary of the activities of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs covering the areas of lawmaking, oversight, and representation.

The practical effects of the activities of the committee can be seen in its fulfillment of the stipulated constitutional mandate designed for the peace, order, and good government of the people. Explicitly, the National Assembly enjoys the Constitutional legislative powers of the Federation (Section 4). Besides, the committee ensured the delivery of good governance which is the essence of government. In fact, Section 14 (2) states that the primary purpose of government is for the security and welfare of the people. Therefore, if the government's primary purpose is for the welfare of the people, then the activities of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs must be geared towards fulfilling the constitutional mandate. Also, the committee's activities are designed to check corruption in the administration of state affairs. With governmental powers delineated between arms of government, the legislature enjoys the unfettered powers in ensuring the execution of government programmes and policies according to legislative intent.

The above, notwithstanding, the study found inadequate resources, the relationship between the committee and its MDAs, peculiar challenges, etc., as obstacles to the performance of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs. Consequently, dedication to responsibilities, improved cooperation between committee and MDAs, provision of resources, and so on were strategies suggested to mitigate the challenges confronting the committee in the future.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the summary, recommendations, and conclusion of the study are laid out. The summary presents an overview of the chapters while the recommendations were derived from field data and literature. Finally, the chapter gives a conclusion drawn from the various aspects of the study.

#### 5.1. Summary of Findings

It is no doubt that legislative committees are critical success factors in the performance of any legislative house. Indeed, to ensure the accomplishment of set legislative targets, it is necessary to create subdivisions in a manageable manner over a wide range of issues. In fact, this accounts for the reason legislative committees enjoy jurisdictional purview over specific issues. E.g., there are committees on Justice, Health, Aviation, Transport, Works, etc. In like manner, the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs is empowered to oversee the affairs of the Niger Delta region implicitly, legally mandated to legislate, represent, and oversight Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) of government with Niger Delta-related mandates. It is on this note, therefore, that this study assessed the performance of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Senate Committees on Niger Delta Affairs focusing primarily on its oversight function. The focus on oversight is because other functions of the legislative assembly are often subsumed into its oversight function. For instance, in making a new law, committees in the conduct of their oversight duties carry out public hearings on the merits and demerits of the proposed law ultimately enforcing its representative function.

The study adopted the mixed research design relying on quantitative and qualitative data. Data sources were primary and secondary. Primary data was obtained from the administration of the questionnaire (adapted from the CPS 8-Factor Model for Committee Diagnosis) while secondary data were taken from the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs sessional reports, official publications of the National Assembly, journal articles, magazines, books, the internet, etc. The purposive sampling technique was used for the selection of data and respondents. The content analysis was used for the analysis of qualitative data, which were presented thematically for easy comprehension, while quantitative data were analyzed and presented in simple percentages and tables.

Following objective one which assessed the extent of the performance of the oversight function by the Senate Committee on Niger Delta between 2011-2019, findings revealed that the Committee undertakes its legislative tasks within the context of the traditional roles of the legislature. Specifically, Order 98(38) of the Senate Standing Orders 2015 (as amended) provided for the establishment of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs. Indeed, the performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta is captured in Table 4.6. The Table provides a summary of the activities of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs covering the areas of lawmaking, oversight, and representation.

Based on objective two which examined the effects of the activities of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta between 2011-2019 on the people of the Niger Delta region, the practical effects of the activities of the committee can be seen in its fulfillment of the stipulated constitutional mandate designed for the peace, order, and good government of the people. Explicitly, the National Assembly enjoys the Constitutional legislative powers of the Federation (Section 4). Besides, the committee ensured the delivery of good governance which is the essence of

government. In fact, Section 14 (2) states that the primary purpose of government is for the security and welfare of the people. Therefore, if the government's primary purpose is for the welfare of the people, then the activities of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs must be geared towards fulfilling the constitutional mandate. Also, the committee's activities are designed to check corruption in the administration of state affairs. With governmental powers delineated between arms of government, the legislature enjoys the unfettered powers in ensuring the execution of government programmes and policies according to legislative intent.

Nevertheless, objective three identified the factors militating against the effective performance of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta. As a result, the study found inadequate resources, the relationship between the committee and its MDAs, peculiar challenges, etc., as obstacles to the performance of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs. Consequently, objective four suggested the dedication to responsibilities, improved cooperation between committee and MDAs, provision of resources, and so on as strategies to mitigate the challenges confronting the committee in the future.

## **5.2. Recommendations**

After all, the study suggests that:

Adherence to constitutional dictates: This plea has become necessary in the face of hostility between MDAs and the committee and the need to stem this ugly tide and foster a constructive relationship between the MDAs and the committee. Although there could be moments of overlap in the performance of the MDAs as well as the committee, amicable means must be adopted to resolve such issues. This is because in the moment of rancor, governance becomes impaired and citizens who are the beneficiaries suffer unjust consequences.

Prompt and Adequate budgetary release: Although the committee would continue to undertake its constitutional responsibility of oversight, however, less would be accomplished if there are no adequate budgetary releases. The Sessional Report, Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs (2015) noted that in all its visits, “the Federal Government hardly meet the level of its contribution for the funding of the Commission. The 3% contribution of the total annual budget expected from the gas processing company operating in the Niger Delta region has never been realized”. This remains the case for other agencies like the Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP) and the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs. Consequently, the executive must strive to ensure the release of budgetary allocations to agencies under the supervision of the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs.

Provision of resources to enable the committee to conduct its activities. There is the need for provisions to be made for financial and material resources that would enable the committee to carry out its mandates without any hindrance. The practice of the committee relying on its agencies to fund its trips must be discouraged as it is ethically wrong. This is because there arises a likelihood of bias if the practice is allowed to fester. In the end, the committee becomes ineffective acting only according to the whims and caprices of the agency.

There is a need for value reorientation for appointed and elected office holders to imbibe the legal requirements of their offices. This plea has become necessary to enhance the prospects of dedication to duty as it must be restated that the ultimate goal of any government is for the security of the citizens. Therefore, to uphold the tenets of the social contract as espoused by the foregoing constitutional provision on the activities of government, elected as well as appointed officers must be orientated on the activities of government.

### **5.3. Conclusion**

Legislative committees are the hub of parliamentary business. This is so because the committees which are tasked with specific jurisdictional matters are mandated by extant provisions to undertake activities within the scope of the subject matter on behalf of the entire membership of the House. Rightly, a legislative chamber relies on the recommendations of its committees to conclude. So in any case, committees are empowered to pursue issues within certain legally permitted limits. Explicitly, the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs with its legal mandate driven from the Senate Standing Order 98 (38) bears a constitutional mandate to interface on matters bothering on the Niger Delta region with the relevant Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs). In the conduct of this function, it is expected according to laid down principle to make recommendations to the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Although the place of Legislative committees in general and the Senate Committee on Niger Delta Affairs in specific in the performance of the Senate cannot be overstated, the effectiveness of its performance continues to be questioned seeing mounting allegations of corruption in MDAs such as the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), the Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP), etc., under its purview. This heightens the concern about the dedication of the Committee to its legislative mandate thus, necessitating the assessment of the performance of the committee between 2011 and 2019. Nevertheless, the findings of this study if implemented, would in the short to long term, reposition the committee for effectiveness and enhance the socio-economic wellbeing of the people of the Niger Delta region.

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