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PERCEPTION, PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AMONG YOUTHS IN NIGER-DELTA REGION OF NIGERIA

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**PERCEPTION, PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT AMONG YOUTHS IN NIGER-DELTA REGION OF
NIGERIA**

BY

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irements for the degree of Master of Science

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science.

PERCEPTION, PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AMONG YOUTHS IN NIGER-DELTA REGION OF NIGERIA

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November 2013

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The major objective of this research was to find the relationship between perception, participation and community development of youth's (CDY) programs. It focus to discover and compare the level perception, participation and community development among respondents in other to find the strength of the relationship between these variables while identifying the predictor of CD among youths. Empowerment, innovation and positive youth's development theories were used as a guide in understanding of the relationship of perception and participation to CD among youths.

Sample for this research consist of 322 selected beneficiaries of shell petroleum Development Company of Nigeria (SPDC's) micro-credit loan for youths and business development in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria. They were selected from six local governments' areas from the three states. The

states are Rivers (Ikwerre and Port-Harcourt Municipal), Imo (Owerri and Uguta) and Delta (Aniocha South and Anioch North) respectively.

Data was collected through survey questionnaire developed based on eight constructs that shaped the two independent variable of perception (Interest, motive, attitude), participation (participation and Decision-making), and CD among youths (Social, Economic and Psychological development) for the dependent variables. The questionnaire was subjected to test with 24 respondents and retest with 30 respondents in other to discover the internal consistency and correlation in the items which cronbach's alpha result proved to be valid and reliable as all the items are above 0.60.

Perception measuring scales were formed based on theory of social interest (Crandall, 1975), unified motive scale (Schonbrodt and Gerdtenberg, 2012), and attitude scale which focus on cognitive, affective and behavioral response (Shivanand and Dragicevic, 2004; Eagly and Chaiken, 1993) emerged as the baselines to draw the scale used in measuring perceptions. Participation measuring scale (Davidson, 1998; Refugee youths action group, 2010) and decision-making scale which emerged from Rochester decision-making scale (Shields, eta'l, 2005) were adopted to measure the level of participation. CD among youths was measured with each of the constructs forming a scale. Social capital development model (Narayan and Cassidy, 2001), psychological development based on cognitive assessment scale and economic development measuring indicators emerged as the scales to measure CD among youths.

From the result of the descriptive analysis, there is a reinforcing moderation in the level in perception (Mean=3.64, SD=.413), participation (Mean=3.71, SD= .442) and CD among youths (Mean=3.65, SD=.371). Another analysis has shown that sex do not determine the level of perception (t= -1.025, p > 0.05), participation (t=-.932, p =0.352) and CD among youths (t=-.640, p = 0.278) based on the result of independent sample t-test. Correlation analysis proved that there is strong relationship between perception and CD with (r = 0.338, p = 0.0001). Also, it proved that participation correlate with CD of youths program with (r=0.238, p = 0.0002). A multiple regression analysis proved that interest and participation are predictors of CD ($\beta_{interest}$ =.142, p= 0.0001) and ($\beta_{participation}$ = .063, p = 0.54).

The research concluded interest and participation contribute about 14.2% and 6.3% as predictor of CD among youths. The implication of this finding is that upgrading CDY programs to be attractive, relevant and satisfactory can boast curiosity in the life of young people in their quest to enhance social, economic and psychological development among them. This will equally increase participation that guarantees CD among youths, thus becoming a model that need to be applied in CDY programs. Therefore, youths should be given more opportunities to lead in community development of youths programs which will give room for appropriate youth's voice in decision-making as such opportunities will enhance integration that reduces negative perception of youths towards CDY programs.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

PERSEPSI, PENYERTAAN DAN PEMBANGUNAN KOMUNITI DALAM KALANGAN BELIA DI JAJAHAN NIGER-DELTA, NIGERIA

Oleh

NWAIWU JAMES CHIMA

November 2013

Pengerusi: **Hanina Halimatusaadiah Binti Hamsan. PhD**

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Objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengenalpasti hubungan antara
persepsi, penyertaan dan pembangunan komuniti dalam kalangan belia
(CDY). Tumpuan kajian meliputi perbandingan tahap persepsi, penyertaan
dan pembangunan komuniti dalam kalangan responden, selain daripada
mengenalpasti kekuatan hubungan antara variable-variabel dan predictor CD
kalangan belia. Teori-teori pendayaupayaan, inovasi dan perkembangan belia
positif telah digunakan sebagai asas memahami hubungan antara persepsi dan
penyertaan dengan pembangunan komuniti dalam kalangan belia.

Sampel kajian ini terdiri daripada 322 peminjam terpilih daripada program
pembiayaan mikro daripada SPDC bagi belia dan pembangunan perniagaan di
jajahan Niger-Delta, Nigeria. Mereka dipilih daripada enam daerah daripada

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tiga negeri iaitu Rivers (Ikwerre and Port-Harcourt Municipal), Imo (Owerri and Uguta) dan Delta (Aniocha South and Anioch North).

Data telah dikumpul menggunakan survey borang soal selidik yang telah dibangunkan berdasarkan lapan konstruk yang membentuk dua pembolehubah bebas iaitu persepsi (minat, motif, sikap), penyertaan (penglibatan dan pembuatan keputusan), dan pembangunan komuniti dalam kalangan belia (social, ekonomi dan psikologi) sebagai pembolehubah bersandar. Soalselidik telah di pra-uji sebanyak dua kali iaitu 24 responden (pra-uji 1) dan 30 responden (pra-uji 2) bagi menguji ketekalan dalaman dan korelasi antara item. Soalselidik adalah boleh dipercaya dan mempunyai kesahan yang boleh diterima kerana semua variable mempunyai nilai alpha cronbach melebihi 0.60.

Alat pengukuran persepsi telah dibentuk berdasarkan gabungan teori minat social (Crandall, 1975), skala motif (Schonbrodt & Gerdtenberg, 2012), dan skala sikap memfokus kepada kognitif, afektif dan tindakbalas tingkahlaku (Shivanand & Dragicevic, 2004; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). Alat pengukuran penyertaan (Davidson, 1998; Refugee youths action group, 2010) dan alat pengukuran pembuatan keputusan dibangunkan dan diadaptasi daripada skala pembuatan keputusan Rochester (Shields, et al. 2005). Model pembangunan modal sosial (Narayan & Cassidy, 2001), pembangunan psikologi berasaskan skala penilaian kognitif serta alat pengukuran pembangunan ekonomi digabungkan sebagai alat untuk mengukur pembangunan komuniti dalam kalangan belia.

Hasil analisis diskriptif menunjukkan responden mempunyai tahap sederhana dari segi persepsi (purata=3.64, s.p. =0.413), penyertaan (purata=3.71, s.p.=0.442), dan CD dalam kalangan belia (purata=3.65, s.p.=0.371). Ujian-t menunjukkan tiada perbezaan signifikan dari segi jantina bagi tahap persepsi (t= -1.025, p> 0.05), penyertaan (t=-.932, p> 0.05) dan CD dalam kalangan belia (t=-.640, p> 0.05). Analisis korelasi membuktikan terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara persepsi (r = 0.338, p= 0.0001) dan penyertaan dengan CD dalam kalangan belia (r=0.238, p= 0.0002). Analisis regresi pelbagai menunjukkan bahawa minat dan penyertaan sebagai prediktor terhadap CD (β_{minat} =.142, p= 0.0001) and ($\beta_{penyertaan}$ = .063, p = 0.54).

Kajian ini menyimpulkan bahawa minat dan penyertaan menyumbang sebanyak 14.2% dan 6.3% terhadap CD kalangan belia. Implikasi hasil kajian ini ialah dengan menaiktarafkan program-program pembangunan komuniti belia agar lebih menarik, relevan dan memuaskan boleh meningkatkan minat masyarakat muda bagi meningkatkan pembangunan sosial, ekonomi dan psikologi dalam kalangan mereka. Ini secara langsung akan meningkatkan penyertaan dan menjamin CD dalam kalangan belia, serta menjadi model yang boleh diaplikasikan dalam program-program pembangunan komuniti. Untuk itu, golongan belia seharusnya diberikan peluang yang lebih dalam program-program pembangunan komuniti kalangan belia yang mana ianya akan memberi ruang kepada belia menyuarakan pendapat dalam pembuatan keputusan sebagai peluang untuk meningkatkan integrasi bagi mengurangkan persepsi negative dalam kalangan belia terhadap program CD kalangan belia.

I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 1st Novermber 2013 to conduct the final examination of Nwaiwu James Chima on his thesis entitled " Perception, Participation and Community Development Among Youths in Niger-Delta Region of Nigeria" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Master of Science.

Members of the Thesis Examination Committee were as follows:

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This Thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follow.

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Date:

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti putra Malaysia or at any other institution.
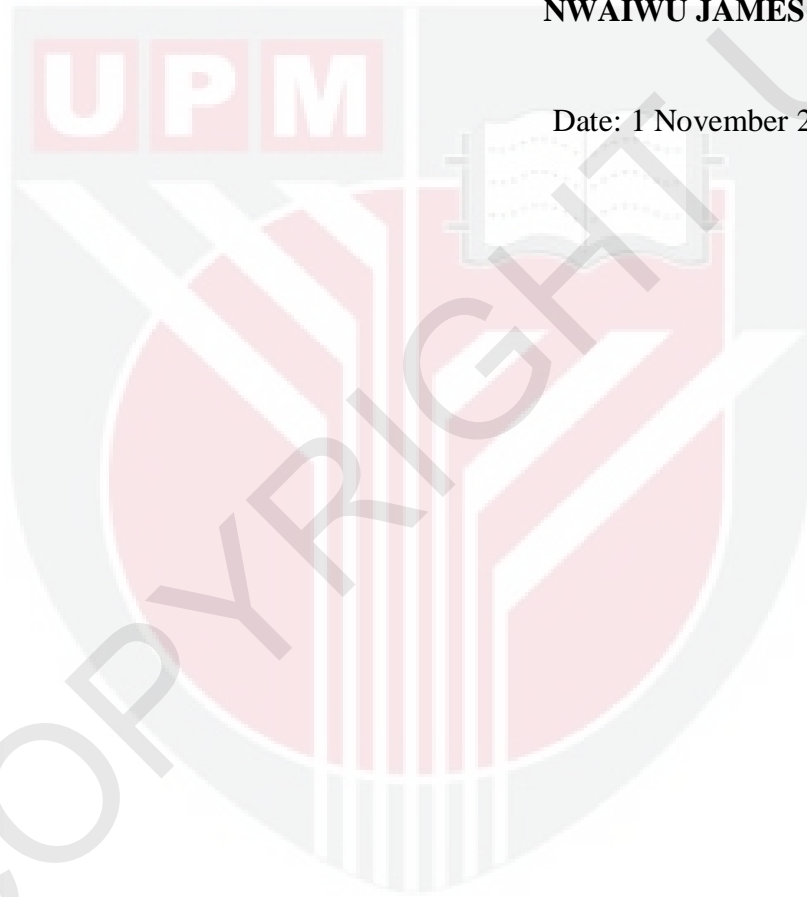
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NWAIWU JAMES CHIMA

Date: 1 November 2013.

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5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UN	United Nation
CD	Community Development
CDY	Community Development of youths
CBO	Community base Organization
MISCAD	Microcredit for Agricultural Development
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
SPDC	Shell Petroleum Development Company (Nigeria)
UNESCO	United Nation Education and Scientific Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of Study

Community development of youths (CDY) is an approach towards empower-ment (Schuftan, 1996). This is because of its ability in raising consciousness of young people to be aware of the resources and capacities within them that can affect changes in their life, communities and the society at large. CDY has been used to achieve networks of neighborhood change, building of social capital for community economic growth, political empowerment in terms of good govern-ance, active participation, and building of community action against the scourge of poverty, diseases, crime, corruption and sex issue which mainly affect youths in many ways (Ennis and West, 2013; Westoby and Botes, 2012). Study on community development of youths (CDY) became necessary since community action can better be build on energetic, healthy and determined group who are more effective and efficient in achieving community development agenda (Wes-toby and Botes, 2012)

Therefore, Community development of youths' which involve building of cogni-tive, social and economic competencies that enables youths' to achieve basic de-velopmental needs for positive adulthood become the focus area of CDY if community action that bring change in the society are to be achieved (Tipper and Avard, 1999). The competencies for this action is to enhance safety, self-worth, independency, connectedness and belongingness for youths which are measured

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with the degree of membership participation, control, ability to contribute, relationship with adults and interest in mastering skills and knowledge (Heldrich, 2000). This can be achieved where there are good youth's development program (community action) with strong leadership ability that foster to establish identity, skills, knowledge and broaden youths perspective on how to address issues that affect them and that of their communities (Lerner et'al, 2005). These issues are likely to reflect on social, economic and psychological development that spurs other developmental areas such as cultural, political and structural development Socially, youths' are engagement in other to enhance positive pro-social behavior by preparing them to withstand all odds that will create drives to shun antisocial behavior while economically, they are involved as an effort to strengthen weak and ineffective state in their life which will eliminating the barriers that hamper functional living standard due to poor management of human and material resources or lack of opportunities for them to better their own lives (Poveda, 2011). Psychologically, CDY sometime help in mental and cognitive empowerment among youths who try to gain power and control over decisions, and resources that determine the quality of life, equalities, connectedness, value and support that bring change among individuals in social groups (Oladipo, 2009)

World Bank (2006) opined that youths' are peoples between the ages of 15–24 years as this number represents the largest age-group in most developing countries. About 90% of them in developing countries are facing challenges of low quality education, lack of marketable skills, high rates of unemployment, crime, early pregnancy, social exclusion, depravity in decision-making and high rates of HIV/AIDS infections (Kirby, et al, 2009; Niekerk, 2006). These problems

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brought community development of youths to the global stage of seeking positive attitude, competence, value and skills which the society need as resources to enhance sustainability through youths development programs. Achieving the above requires building capacity on young people who will embark on community action that will development in the near future (UNESCO, 2012).

In the United States of America, preventive approach has been adopted as a strategy for community development of youth's programs (Weissberg, Kumpfer, and Seligman, 2003). It target to prevent delinquent behaviors among youths, through identification of risk, promoting, and protective factors, which will bring positive outcomes from CDY programs. After school activities for youths are examples of CDY program that has embraced protective and promoting approach that target to build prosaically behavior among youths. After school activities tries to nurture discipline that guarantees improve success in learning, respecting, responsibility, building of confidence and reinforcement of values which position youths to be upstanding citizen and contributing community member (Catalano et'al, 2004). Also, approaches that intend to address risk factors focus to identify solutions to behavioral health problems such as substance abuse and misuse of fire arms by youths.

In Asian pacific region, community development of youths practice is currently undergoing incorporation into the national policy framework for social and economic development. Thailand government right from their fifth, ninth and tenth development plans made provision that will help youths to fulfill their potential by re-energizing institutions that will encourage social, economic, education, religion, professionals and political development through CDY programs that

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will effectively and transparently implement these plans without discrimination (Thailand Social Monitor on Youth, 2008).

In Sub-Sahara Africa, especially the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria, community development of youths programs adopted rescue and recovery approach which intend to build capacities and carrier development for youths' that is now serving as contingency measure to solve negative correlation between youths restiveness and economic cum socio-psychological development problems among youths (Ifenkwe, 2012; Adesope, Agumagu, Ukpongson, and Harcourt, 2010). Youth's restiveness is a problem that demands serious intervention in the Niger-Delta region (Adesope et al. 2010). Restiveness of youths in this region has been attributed to neglect, marginalization, mistrust on young people, deprivation of functional education, lack of healthy information, and non-participation of youths in decision-making. Also, unemployment that hatched and galvanizes insurgent kidnapping, militancy, cultism, armed robbery, prostitution, AIDS/HIV explosion, oil bunkering, vandalization of oil installations, drug addiction and human trafficking that virtually involved great percentage of Niger-Delta youths has become a reason for the need of empowerment and innovative action that will bring change to this soaring situation (Chukwuemeka and Aghara, 2010)

Also, sexual status of individual has been attributed to be a determinant of performance which invariably might not differ from that of achievement in CDY programs. Uwa-Okoh (2010) study on sexual related difference and how this variance affects the quality of dispositions and perception of individuals were found to be inconclusive as this emerged as a reason to seek for deeper discover

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to determine if there are significant difference between male and female perception, participation and enhancement of community development among youths who benefited from the SPDC's microcredit for youths and business development program.

It is on this basis that brought community development of youths to start emerging as a spotlight for government, researchers, educators, and other supporting agencies to define and examine active engagement of young people in sports, politics, community development and economic activities (Youth Participation in Development Guide, 2010). Building capacities through empowering youths in terms of social, economic and psychological development has remained the baseline for CDY programs in both developed and developing countries. CDY try to place youths as agent of change and engine of economic development. (Wang, Walker, and Redmond, 2006; Peacock, 2004; Culkin, and Smith, 2000) However, community development of youths as a concepts have emerge from several decades of research and practical innovation which have reproduced superficial changes on how we think about youths and their development (Bass; 1999). A deficit conception by (Hall, 1904) that saw youthful age corresponding to the period in evolution when humans changed from being beasts to being civilized has made youthful age to be universally seen as a period of uproar. This has been affecting youth's perceptions and participation in community development of youth's programs and has resulted to the beliefs by practitioners working on youths to see them as at-risk and venerable group (Butts, Bazemore, and Meroe, 2010).

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Experts in community development of youths directs attentions towards identification and solving problems that affects youths; such as unemployment, school dropout, premature pregnancy, youth's violence/militancy, sexually transmitted diseases, drug abuse, and crime (Francisco, Holt, Swenson and Fawcett, 2002). This kind of approach to youth's community development program which focused to address negative aspect of youthful life has affected youth's perceptions and participation as this might be one of the factors that hinders achievement in community development of youths programs. It is on this note that this research intend to explore on the intrinsic aspect of community development of youths focus which has always been isolated by many researchers who always focus on deficit areas of youthful life which do not see youths as resource for problem solution but a problem.

1.1.1. SPDC's CDY Program in the Niger-Delta

Shell Petroleum and Development Company (SPDC) was at first known as Shell D'Arcy and subsequent as Shell-BP, which was in partnership capitalized by the Royal Dutch/Shell Group of Companies and the British Petroleum (BP) Group on an equal footing. This company came into existence as a result the joint operation agreement between major multinational oil companies operating in the territory of Nigeria which include Shell BP, Total/ELF (EPNL), AGIP and Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC).

Nigeria's oil and gas exploration business effectively commenced in 1956 when Shell D'Arcy now SPDC discovered oil in commercial quantity in Olubri, cur-

rently Belyesa State. Before this time, Shell has been given the mandate to commence oil exploration in 1938 with a concession granted to the company to explore oil throughout the territory of Nigeria. This made shell to be dominant to the Nigeria oil industry up to present. After 1960, an exploration right in onshore and offshore areas adjoining the Niger-Delta was extended to other foreign companies which saw the arrival of multinational oil companies that formed what is called today SPDC.

The position of SPDC and role the play in Nigeria economy has created room for higher expectation in the frontline of reducing the level of poverty and youths unemployment that has engulfed the people of Niger-Delta since decades due to problems emanating from disarticulation of economic activities caused by oil exploration business in the region. This disarticulation which has put both fishermen and farmers out of job has caused damaging fluctuation on the relationship between the company and their host communities. Youths are the most affected in this disarticulation which has continued to affect their perception and participation in SPDCs activities and its CDY program that are seen with mixed feelings.

1.2. Problem Statement

Currently, much has been said about community development of youth's programs and the role it should play in preparing youths for positive adulthood. Youth development is an important area to every government which has attract-

ed continued investment from both government and private sector organization. The continued growth of youth's problems such as school dropout, youth's restiveness, militancy, cultism, prostitution and so many vices led to the emergence of community development of youth's programs. While there are continued investment for youths development as part of the millennium development goal (MDG's) which has been adopted by virtually all members countries of the United Nation (UN), it should be reasonable enough to study CDY programs process as a smart step of proffering solutions to problems associated with community development among youths. The bond of effectiveness in this regard must be achieved if community development of youth's programs which aimed to build capacities on our future generation should be positioned in line of success.

While there are still huge investment such as SPDC's microcredit coming as the society continue to search for solution to youth's problems, embarking on search that will discover explicit and intrinsic solutions to streamlined program efficacy become very necessary in meeting with CDY needs, thus, bring community development of youth programs at the platform of success in solving societal problems. However, majority of researchers have always focus on youths problems which is being supported by deficit ideas that places youths as problems to be fixed with less interest on intrinsic factors of their perceptions and participation which determines their resilience and achievement in community development of youths programs.

Attainment of community development among youths lies on some neglected intrinsic factors of perceptions and participation as mentioned above (Brennan,

Barnett, and McGrath, 2009). This, in many situations has shutdown opportunities of youths to voice opinions in the process of making key decisions that suppose to play indelible role in enhancing community action that bring change where people come together with willingness to share, control, accept obligation and accent individual capacities (Lekies , Baker and Baldini, 2009; Agostino, 2009). However, community development of youth's programs strives to achieve youths competent and skills which will help young people to meet up with their personal needs and that of their communities.

SPDC CDY programs in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria have failed in its bid to use rescue and recovery approach in solving youth's restiveness and militancy in the region (Omoyefa, 2010). High rate of restiveness and other youth's development problems have ravaged the shores of communities in the Niger-Delta which proved lack of efficiency and effectiveness of community development of youths' programs. Among several reason that has brought this inefficiency have been linked to problems associated with factors that encourage perception and participation which lies in the attitude, interest, motive and voice of youths in decision-making process in CDY programs.

SPDC social right to operate in the region of Niger-Delta has been received with mixed feelings due to its interaction with host communities in respects to their culture and traditions. The operation of SPDC and desecrating of peoples place of worships (Shrines) in the name of oil exploration may have been a good reason that may have cost negative perception and low participation of youths in their CDY programs. Another problem that may have created the dichotomy in the relationship of SPDC and host community might be link to SPDCs activities

which has continually creating environmental insecurity as a result of countless oil spills that are approached in isolation or most case with poor clean up. This has been tagged as the black gold of the Niger-Delta. Poor stakeholder engagement of host communities by SPDC in various activities ranging from security, employment and contribution to infrastructural development which manifest in SPDC's reliance on security surveillance and expertise from outside has damaged its credibility and operational security. Indeed, the naïve general feelings of every Niger-Delta person that in the face of huge petroleum resource deposited and explore by the Nigeria government and SPDC in the region which account for over 90% of he country's revenue, still immediate attention has not been given o wide rang of poverty, unemployment, high maternal and child morality , underdevelopment, and worst environmental degradation manifesting in erosion, gas flaring and spills which has continue force them out of job and threatening their health .

In the presence of the above, Shell Petroleum development company (SPDC) of Nigeria came up with community development of youths program which they tagged, SPDC's microcredit for youths and business development in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria. This program is innovative and empowering as it target to change social, economic and psychological states of Niger-Delta youths by checkmating the prevalent of the above mention youths problems in the region through youths empowerment. The program is said to be innovative because it is the first of its kind coming from oil exploration companies in the region despite accusations that these oil exploration companies are impoverishing their host communities due to constant oil spills and gas flaring which damage the envi-

ronment and aquatic habitats of the region, thereby putting youths out of jobs since majority of these youths are fishermen and farmers.

These accusations may have effects on youths which might affect their perception and participation since there is continued youths restiveness in the region which has made community development of youth's programs to be seen as disappointing to supporting organization who their investments in this area would have contributed more in the reduction of youth's development problems (Yaqub, 2002). This shows that there is disconnection between community developments of youth's programs and outcomes in terms of social, economic and psychological development because of isolation of intrinsic factors that shape perceptions and participation. This disconnection has been linked to lack of knowledge, appropriate socialization/orientation, negative perception to innovation, and paucity of skills which these factors provide.

It is on this reason of perceptions formed by youths due to various practices of SPDC, the disconnection that exist between CDY programs and outcome, and the need for youths involvement in CDY programs, instigated the interest to study the perception , participation and community development among youths in this research. The above situation points fundamental factors that affect community development of youth's programs in the Niger-Delta region which systematically are becoming a parochial for the emergency of insurgencies, thus becomes a major significance that has led to this research.

1.3. Research Questions

Base on these problems statement above, this research is designed to give answer to the following research questions.

1. What are the level of perceptions, participation and community development among youths in SPDC's microcredit for youths and business development program?

2. What are the differences between perception, participation and community development among male and female participants in SPDC's microcredit for youths and business development program?

3. What are the relationship between youth's perception, participation and community development of youths in the SPDC's microcredit for youths and business development program?

4. What are the unique predictors of community development among youths in SPDC's microcredit for youths and business development program?

1.4. Objective of Study

The specific objectives of this research is

1. To measure the level of youth's perceptions, participation and community development among youths who benefited in the SPDC's microcredit for youths and business development program.

2. To compare the different level of perception, participation and community development among male and female participants in SPDC's microcredit for youths and business development program.

3. To determine the relationship between youths perception, participation and community development among youths in SPDC's microcredit for youths and business development program

4. To identify the unique predictor of community development among youth in SPDC's microcredit for youths and business development program.

1.5.Hypotheses of the study

This study formulated five hypotheses based on objectives 2 and 3.

Objective 2: To compare the different level of perception, participation and community development among male and female participants in the program.

Hypotheses:

Ho1: There is no significant different in the level of perception between male and female participants in the SPDC's Microcredit for youths and business development program in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria.

Ho2: There is no significant different in the level of participation between male and female participants in the SPDC's Microcredit for youths and business development program in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria..

Ho3: There is no significant different in the level of CD between male and female participants in the SPDC's Microcredit for youths and business development program in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria.

Objective 3: To determine the relationship between youth's perception, participation and community development among youths.

Hypotheses:

Ho4: There is no significant relationship between perception and community development among youths in the SPDC's Microcredit for youths and business development program in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria..

Ho5: There is no significant relationship between participation and community development among youths in the SPDC's Microcredit for youths and business development program in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria.

1.6. Significance of the Study

The major significant of this research is it ability to discover the relationship of perceptions and participation to CDY programs which will help in strengthening the intrinsic factors that spur development among youths. The study has come up to answer a call to duty for researchers in this field to reinvent and streamline CD program for efficiency and effectiveness which will turn the good investment and incoming ones to produce the needed result of building and developing our youths socially, economically and psychological.

Practically, the result of this research and recommendations that will be made will add to existing literatures on the need to accept and recognize the role of some intrinsic factors such as perception and participation as affective factor to be considered in implementation CD programs among youths. This will disman-

tle CD approach which focuses to address youth's problems with less recognition of intrinsic factors that can help CD among youths. The result of this research is likely to position youths as needed resources in solving their own problems instead of being perceived as a problem to the society.

Theoretically, the outcome of this research will create room for rigorous study in the field of community development as the model for this study can be adopted or modified for further study in community development of youths programs.

1.7. Scope of the Study

This study is to earmark the relationship of youth's perceptions, participation and CD of youth programs in Niger-Delta region of Nigeria, using the SPDC's micro credit loan scheme for youths and business development program as a case study. Out of the nine States that makes up the political Niger-Delta, Imo, Delta and Rivers States have been selected as the scope of this study. Furthermore, among the nature of youths engagement in terms of job role, such as skilled, unskilled, Trade, Service Industries, and others, this study is restricted to four job roles namely: Skilled, Unskilled, Trade and Farming. The reason behind this scope is in line with the beneficiaries' predominance in these sectors. Youths between 15-39 years in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria who are beneficiaries of SPDC's Loan scheme for youths and business development whose names are found in the list of Microcredit for agricultural development (MISCAD). However, youths that do not benefit from the loan scheme was excluded.

1.8. Conceptual Framework

This sketched framework is design to explain the theme of this research, which embraces microcredit as a mechanism use by SPDC with the aim of achieving Community development of youths in the Niger-Delta region. Using the microcredit and business development program based on the illustration on the sketch holds the view that SPDC embarked on community development of youths program (Youths Engagement) through microcredit provision in other to build capacities on youths by giving them opportunity to engage themselves in boasting their existing business or learn new skills so as to make them competent in meeting up with their needs and that of their communities.

Figure.1.1 Conceptual Framework of the Relationship of Perception, Participation and Community Development among youths
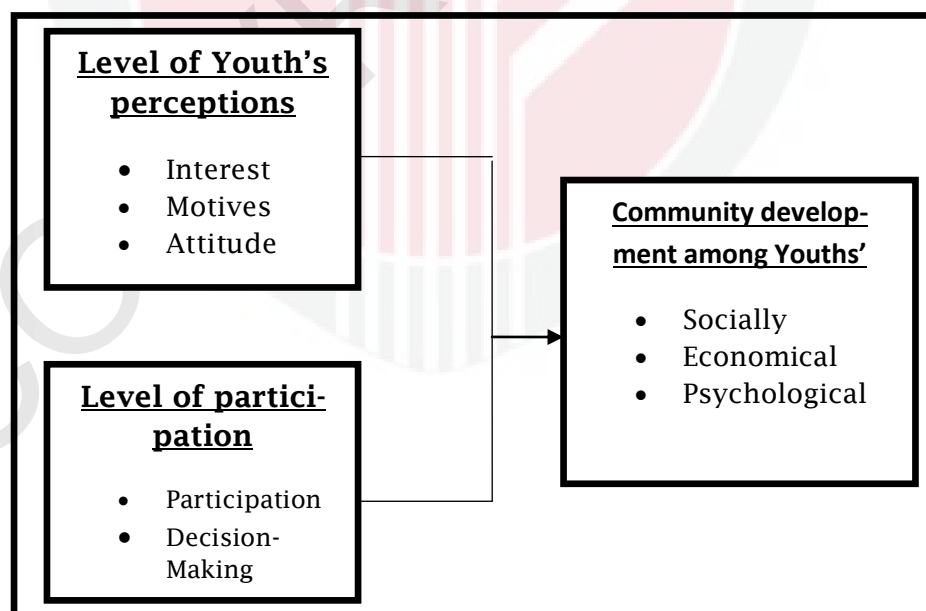
It is for the youths as indicated in the sketch that intends to examine perception of them towards the program which is a determinant for gaining community de-

velopment (CD). The diagram created room to test if there is relationship between youth perceptions and participation as independent variables with the level of community development among youths. Interest, motive and attitude are the construct of perception while Participation and decision-making are the construct that measures the level of participation among youths. Social, economic and psychological development which forms the product of the research is used to measure the level of CD among youths.

However, the line that linked with the three major dialog box tries to find the relationship of the process variables.

1.9. **Definition of Terminologies**

This section will give both the conceptual and operational definition of major terms and variables used in this study to enhance a clearer understanding of them. The operational aspect of the definitions will be base on the meaning of concepts as it is use in this study while the conceptual aspect will be based on general definitions.

Community Development of youths

<u>Conceptual definition</u>

Community development of youths is an act of improving the quality of life among youths and expanding their ability to shape their own future by providing them with opportunities to better living as a step to ensure that young people meet needs for relatedness, belonging and mastery through their participation

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(Eccles and Gootman, 2002). This should focus on engagement youths in capacity building through partnership, initiatives and strategies aimed to reposition young people in communities through acquisition of skills, information, access to credit, education and awareness, which provides needs that effect positive change in youths life.

Operational definition:

Community development of youths involves all steps taken by SPDC to improving youths social, economic and psychological state in the Niger-Delta. SPDC's microcredit for youths and business development in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria is a CDY program design to position youths to contribute effectively in on issues that affects, their communities and readiness for stable adulthood.

Perception

Conceptual definition

Perception is the composition, detection and understanding of sensory knowledge in order to fabricate a cognitive picture through the process of transduction, which sensors in the body that transform motions from the environment into encoded nervous signals. This helps an individual to make judgment on issues and activities that takes place around his social environment and definitely reflect on his interest, motive and attitude about the action. (Goldstein et al, 2005). Therefore, it should be seen as an extraordinary process that is accom-

plished by mechanisms which, in their exquisite complexity, work so well to bring outcomes and awareness of the environment and our ability to navigate out of situation.

<u>Operational definition</u>

In this study, perception is taken to be the judgments which Niger-Delta youths in the presence of disarticulation of their economy by SPDCs have on CDY program provided by SPDC for youths in the Niger-Delta.

Youth Participation

<u>Conceptual definition</u>

Participation is an active process where people are involved in shaping, implementing and evaluating community development programs in which beneficiaries have influence on outcomes and shares benefits. Therefore, participation in this context is the involvement of human collective activity in different procedures towards expression of public opinions and ideally exercising of influence about political, economic, cultural and other social decisions that affects groups or the society.

<u>Operational definition</u>

Youth participation in this study is the participation of youths who benefited in SPDC microcredit loan for youths and business development as a new innovation program aimed to empower and position them for better adulthood. This has

to do with the opportunity for participation in decisions-making process over the microcredit loan scheme and their response to SPDC microcredit in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria.

Youths

Conceptual definition

Definition of who should be address as a 'youth' often varies from country to country. According to the united nation at the international youth's year in (1985), "youths are those persons between the ages of 15-24 years" but there is a contradiction with this definition base on the united nation definition of a child, which according to united nation range between 1-18 years. However, in Nigerian youth's policy plan, persons of ages 15 to 35, who are citizens of the federal republic of Nigeria are considered as youth since this age group represents the most active, the most volatile, and yet the most vulnerable segment of the Nigeria's population.

Operational definition

A youth in this study is defined as a person (male or female) whose, age are between 15-39 years that received the SPDC's microcredit loan from microcredit for agricultural development (MISCAD). Youths are those from Niger-Delta region who have received microcredit loan of the scheme and has used it in other to improve their lives and business.

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