Language Management and Resource Governance: A Panacea for Curbing Youth Restiveness in the Niger Delta Region

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Abstract. *The study investigated the role of language management and resource governance in mitigating youth restiveness in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The region, encompassing nine States, namely Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo, and Rivers, faces challenges despite its rich natural resources, including oil and gas. These challenges include environmental degradation, poverty, and widespread youth restiveness. This work focused on six States from the South-South geopolitical zone made up of Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Edo and Delta. A survey research design was employed, involving 1,105 male and female youths, to explore opinions on language's role in conflict resolution and the impact on resource governance practices. Data was collected using questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics and Chi-square tests and the analysis confirms significant associations between effective language use, resource governance, and decreased incidents of youth restiveness. Findings indicated widespread support for language as a tool for conflict resolution and emphasized the importance of transparent and inclusive resource governance in addressing youth restiveness. The study recommends involving youths in decision-making and utilizing inclusive, respectful language to address grievances, policy interventions that prioritize effective communication strategies and equitable resource distribution to promote social harmony and reduce tensions in the Niger Delta.*

Key words: *Youth, Restiveness, Language Management, Resource Governance, Niger Delta.*

INTRODUCTION

Language plays an invaluable role in human life, serving as a primary means of expressing thoughts, feelings, emotions, ideas, opinions, and perceptions (Jurafsky, 2020). It distinguishes humans from other creatures through its unique structure and capability to convey complex messages across various aspects of existence (Lindquist, MacCormack, & Shablack, 2015). Language can be both an instrument of peace and a catalyst for conflict. Effective language management can foster harmony, development, and peaceful coexistence, whereas its mismanagement can lead to discord (Jurafsky, 2020).

Ezikeojiaku (2004) notes that language is integral to our daily existence; it is crucial for our functionality and enables us to carry out even the most routine tasks. People are so immersed in language—both in terms of what is communicated and the manner in which it is conveyed—that they often overlook its role in making communication possible. It is only when communication fails that the significance of language becomes clear. However, it is essential to recognize that while language is vital for communication and social interactions, it can also be used to create division. This can occur when language is employed, either deliberately or accidentally, in ways that cause harm to others.

Nelde (2010) argues that issues commonly perceived as political, economic, or sociological are often fundamentally linked to linguistic conflicts. This suggests that conflicts of all kinds often arise from the use of language, whether through verbal or non-verbal means.

Youth restiveness, a common aspect of human interaction, underscores the need for effective communication in resolving conflicts (Ezirim, 2011). Miscommunication can escalate tensions, while clear, appropriate communication can mitigate destructive outcomes and enhance understanding (Lindquist et al., 2015). Proper management of youth restiveness through effective language use can lead to improved freedom, reduced tension, and better productivity, thus presenting a peaceful alternative to violent measures (Ezirim, 2011).

Globally, crises and conflicts often arise from political issues, labor disputes, and demands for justice, as seen in Syria, Iraq, and Sudan (Adeyeye, 2007). Nigeria's Niger Delta region is a notable example, where conflict stems from demands for local control and management of resources (Ezirim, 2011). The neglect of these demands has led to the emergence of militant groups like the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and the Niger Delta Avengers (NDA), who resort to extreme measures such as pipeline vandalism and kidnapping to address issues of deprivation, underdevelopment, and environmental degradation (Adeyeye, 2007).

Governance encompasses the processes and systems through which decisions are made and resources are managed (Adeyeye, 2007). It involves setting expectations, allocating power, and verifying performance to ensure the effective management of resources and security (Ezirim, 2011). Misgovernance, characterized by resource misappropriation and failure to address the populace's needs, is exemplified by the Niger Delta crisis (Adeyeye, 2007).

Resource governance refers to the processes, policies, and institutions that manage the distribution of natural resources (Ezirim, 2011). In the Niger Delta, poor resource governance has resulted in socio-economic disparities and environmental degradation, fueling local grievances and youth restiveness (Ezirim, 2011). Effective resource governance requires equitable resource distribution and inclusive decision-making that reflects the linguistic diversity of the region. This ensures local communities can understand and participate in governance processes, fostering ownership and accountability (Jurafsky, 2020).

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

Aim of the Study: To investigate the role of language management and resource governance in reducing youth restiveness in the Niger Delta region.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To assess the perception of language's importance in resolving conflicts among Youths.

2. To examine the impact of language choice on escalating or reducing youth restiveness.

3. To explore the role of language and resource governance in addressing youth restiveness.

4. To investigate the relationship between effective resource governance and reduced youth restiveness.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were raised to guide the study;

1. Is language a panacea to the problem of Youth Restiveness in Niger Delta?

2. Can resource governance help curb Youth Restiveness in Niger Delta?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study:

$H0_0$: Language management and resource governance do not act as a panacea for curbing youth restiveness in the Niger Delta region.

$H0_1$: Language management and resource governance act as a panacea for curbing youth restiveness in the Niger Delta region.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Youth restiveness in the Niger Delta region has been a longstanding issue driven by socio-economic disparities, environmental degradation, and inadequate resource governance. Despite various interventions, the problem persists, causing significant instability and hindering development in the region. This study on "Language Management and Resource Governance: A Panacea for Curbing Youth Restiveness in the Niger Delta Region" seeks to explore innovative solutions by focusing on the strategic role of language management and resource governance.

The justification for this study is manifold:

1. **Persistent Regional Instability**: The Niger Delta remains one of Nigeria's most volatile regions due to youth restiveness. Understanding and addressing the root causes of this unrest is crucial for regional stability and national development.

2. **Unique Approach**: While many studies have focused on socio-economic and political solutions, this research introduces a novel perspective by examining how language management and resource governance can contribute to resolving youth restiveness. This approach is based on the premise that effective communication and fair resource management can foster mutual understanding and inclusive participation, leading to sustainable peace.

3. **Empirical Evidence**: The study employs a descriptive survey design, collecting data through questionnaires and oral interviews with youths across six states in the Niger Delta. This empirical approach ensures that the findings are grounded in the actual experiences and perceptions of the affected youths, providing a solid basis for the proposed solutions.

4. **Policy Implications**: The insights gained from this study have the potential to inform policymakers and stakeholders on the importance of involving local communities in decision-making processes. By highlighting the significance of respectful and inclusive language, the study can guide the development of policies that promote better governance and address the grievances of the youth.

5. **Contribution to Academic Literature**: This research adds to the growing body of knowledge on conflict resolution and governance by providing evidence on the effectiveness of language management and resource governance in curbing youth restiveness. It opens new avenues for further research and practical applications in other conflict-prone regions.

6. **Practical Relevance**: Given the high stakes involved in resolving youth restiveness in the Niger Delta, this study's findings can be directly applied to ongoing efforts to improve regional stability and development. The emphasis on communication and resource governance offers practical strategies that can be implemented by local and national authorities.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The Niger Delta region of Nigeria has long grappled with youth restiveness, fueled by socio-economic disparities, environmental degradation, and contentious resource governance. Conventional

approaches to conflict resolution have often fallen short, necessitating innovative solutions. This study proposes that effective language management and inclusive resource governance can serve as transformative strategies in mitigating youth restiveness. By exploring the role of language in conflict resolution and the impact of equitable resource distribution, this research seeks to offer a nuanced understanding of how these factors can foster sustainable peace and development in the region.

Key Points:

1. **Innovative Approach:** While previous studies have primarily focused on socio-economic and political dimensions, this research introduces a novel perspective by emphasizing the pivotal role of language in conflict resolution. It argues that respectful and inclusive language can bridge communication gaps, reduce tensions, and promote constructive dialogue among stakeholders.

2. **Practical Implications:** By empirically investigating perceptions and experiences through surveys and interviews, this study aims to provide tangible insights for policymakers and stakeholders. These insights can inform policy formulation and interventions aimed at enhancing governance structures and addressing youth grievances effectively.

3. **Academic Contribution:** This research contributes to academic literature by expanding the discourse on conflict resolution mechanisms. It offers empirical evidence on the efficacy of language management and resource governance in conflict mitigation, thereby enriching theoretical frameworks and guiding future research endeavors in similar contexts.

4. **Policy Relevance:** The findings of this study have significant policy implications, advocating for policies that promote linguistic inclusivity and equitable resource management. By advocating for these policies, the study aims to foster a conducive environment for sustainable peacebuilding and socio-economic development in the Niger Delta region.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language and Conflict Resolution

Language is a very veritable tool for conflict resolution if it is managed effectively. On the other hand if language used is vindictive, humiliating and devoid of respect for human rights it can inflame the crises. Jija (2012) as cited in Ani (2015) stresses the importance of language cooperation in social affair. Similarly. Hayakawa (1991) cited in the same source also maintains that people should avoid using words, utterances or vocabulary items that are capable of creating tension, confrontation and conflict between people. For instance, the author frowns at the use of such words as irresponsible, unguarded, arrogant, vandals, inferior in conflict situations. Instead of promoting peace, these words according to the author can create tension and fuel conflict. Olerede and Olorede (2015) support this view that careful selection and use of words in a language can promote peace or otherwise generate conflict.

Also, the use of pragmatic non-verbal communication approach has been identified as invaluable instrument for addressing conflicts, especially the conflict between a people and the government or any corporate body. Pragmatic non-verbal communication refers to the understanding of the feelings of the people and the provision of social amenities and infrastructural facilities to the aggrieved people instead of talking verbally. Dickson (2015) states that this approach could be used to solve any conflict between the people and the government.

Okoh (2005) suggested a collaborative problem-solving methodology to conflict management. This approach the author stated, gives participants an equal chance to express their views, generate options and influence decision. Citing Kepner and Likubo (1996), the author goes on to state that the collaborative approach to 'problem solving' and decision making places an equal priority on the relationship with the other parties and on a mutually satisfying outcome. The strategies of the 'problem-solving' conflict management style include building trust, communicating face-to-face, gathering information, dialoguing, negotiating, valuing diversity, team building, having focus group decisions, searching for alternatives and seeking 'win-win' solutions. The author concludes that the application of a participatory approach in the Niger Delta is not new but policy makers have over the

years paid lip service to the issue and its principles have not been wholly applied. Hence, the desired result of peace in the Niger Delta region has remained an illusion.

Taylor (2014) notes that conflicts are ubiquitous part of social life. The author examines how language functions in conflict and how different communicative acts relates to speakers' motivational goals and conflict outcome. The work is considered from the viewpoint of micro and macro levels. At the micro level, the author looks at the different forms of cue-response sequences and their role in managing information exchange and structuring relationships in conflict. At the macro level, it examines how episodes of language produce phases and cycles that escalate conflict or move it toward a resolution. The author notes in a final analysis that language plays a paramount role in resolving conflicts.

Adejimola and Olufumilayo (2009) sees language as an indispensable human endowment which according to Crystal (1987), has the 'magical and mystical' and 'unique role in capturing the breath of human thought and endeavours'. The paper examines the significant relationship between languages and thought in conflict management and resolution. It notes that peace is a desirable condition but conflicts are inevitable in any society. Based on this, language, information and communication are very essential in promoting, preventing and resolving conflict situations. It notes that negotiation or dialogue can only take place where exchanging and sharing of information are possible. Therefore, communication is the goal of language as mutual agreement is the goal of conflict resolution. The paper advocates creating and maintaining a just order in the society and the use of non-violent methods in resolving conflicts.

Akinnawonu (2006) as cited in Adejimola (2009), argues that dialogue must be constructively employed in disputes or conflicts situations in order to impact positively on the peaceful resolution of conflicts. It notes that since the rule of law ensures peace rather than violence in the country and knowing that dialogue is a necessary path to peace, it inevitably means that dialogue is a fundamental factor in ensuring the rule of law. It is believed that lack of opportunity for explanation is responsible for misunderstandings and suspicions between parties in conflicts. Parties in conflict must come together, talk together, agree together in order to find a solution to their problem.

Gomes de Matos (2006) discusses the use of peaceful language in conflict resolution. It shows how the vital concepts of language and peace can be integrated and applied in varied contexts of human communication interaction. The author highlights four principles for peaceful language uses.

These are:

(a) Being a peaceful language budge person between/among persons, groups and communities

(b) Dignifying one's daily dialogue.

(c) Honoring humanism and fostering humanization.

(d) Acting as a peace patriot at all times.

The first principle entails viewing and treating conflicts and controversies constructively, convincing and cooperatively, rather than competitively or coercively, thus contributing to a culture of compassion. The second principle centers on addressing other persons with respectful language and optimistic vocabulary. This is done by disagreeing through empathic language that is placing oneself in the other's shoes through the use of positivizers (adjectives and verbs which can enhance positive qualities/traits in people). The third principle stresses avoiding/preventing verbal harm and humiliation, applying justice and peace to communicative acts, rephrasing potentially dehumanizing messages. The fourth principle advocates perceiving persons as peace partners, promoting a passion for peace, particularly in aggressive and hostile contexts and monitoring communication for their ethical, moral and social values.

Youth Restiveness

Youth restiveness refers to the condition where young people, feeling discontented, become unable to remain calm or quiet, frequently exhibiting a lack of self-control (Ejumudo, 2014). This phenomenon has been a significant and current issue across all socio-economic and political spheres

in Nigeria. It is evident that Nigeria cannot achieve substantial growth and development while its youth remain restive (Akpokighe & Ejovi, 2021). Youth restiveness in Nigeria is caused by many factors. Prominent among them are: marginalization, unequal distribution of natural resources, poor child upbringing, poverty, unemployment, youthful exuberance, inadequate educational opportunities and resources, lack of basic infrastructure, corruption, bad governance, political instability and frustration, inadequate communication and information flow, ethnic/tribal crisis, drug/alcohol abuse, overpopulation, under population, peer group and cult influence, insecurity, among others. Marginalization of the youths has gained ground that many of them resort to anti-social behaviors because of their perceived distress in the scheme of things in the society. Thus, in order to get their share of the benefits accruing to the society from selfish elders who marginalized them, some youths resort to taking on their elders headlong, culminating in the restiveness, rampant in most of our communities today (Coleman, 1996 as citied in Ushe, 2014).

The issues of inequitable distribution of national resources, marginalization, poverty, and unemployment have driven youth towards restiveness, thereby destabilizing societal systems. To explain youth restiveness, two theories were adopted: conflict theory and strain theory. According to Crossman (2024),

Conflict Theory states that tension and conflict arise when resources, status, and power are unevenly distributed between groups in society and that this conflict becomes the engine for social change. In this context, power can be understood as control of material resources and accumulated wealth, control of politics and institutions that make up society, and one's social status relative to others (determined not by class but by race, gender, sexuality, culture, and religion among other things).(para. 1)

The classic strain theory focuses on deprived youth. Britannica (2024) notes that the inability of youths to accomplish set goals forces them into crime. Crossman (2019) also avers that

Strain Theory explains deviant behavior as an inevitable outcome of the strain individuals experience when society does not provide adequate and approved means of achieving culturally valued goals. For example, when a society places cultural value on economic success and wealth, but only provides legally sanctioned means for a small portion of the population to achieve these goals, those excluded may turn to unconventional or criminal means of attaining them. (para. 1)

In light of the above, the government should ensure fair treatment for all. Segregation, deprivation, misappropriation, and embezzlement of funds should be curbed to prevent criminality and underdevelopment in societies. Essentially, meeting the economic, political, educational, social, medical, and technological needs of the masses is crucial to enhancing development and growth in societies.

Youth restiveness in Nigeria stems from multiple factors such as poor governmental policies, lack of job opportunities, poor living standards, inadequate education, poor infrastructure, and misinformation. These issues result in increasing crime rates, insecurity, economic instability, and communal rebellion. Youths, lacking employment and proper guidance, are often manipulated into unlawful activities. Inadequate government policies and poor resource management exacerbate these problems, leading to widespread dissatisfaction and violence. This restiveness impacts societal progress and security, driving away investors and increasing poverty and unemployment, thus creating a vicious cycle of unrest and underdevelopment (Akpokighe & Ejovi, 2021).

The unequal distribution of resources has led to a magnitude of youth violence in one form or the other. Sometimes the unequal socio-economic development of the various ethnic groups leads to inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts due to the dissatisfaction of the people. Chukwuemeka, Anazado, and Nzewi (2011) affirmed this fact thus: The dissatisfaction of the people of South-South, especially the youths, on the level of attention given to the development of the region and the damages to their ecology by oil is the major cause of the alarming rate of youth restiveness.

The availability and accessibility of drugs in street corners predispose any of the youths to abnormal behaviors when they come under their influence, and this adds to their restiveness. Some disgruntled

leaders, elders, and politicians in our society resort to recruiting youths for settling scores or using them against perceived enemies. With this trend, the activities of these youths have degenerated into outright criminality. Once the youths get mobilized for these nefarious activities, they become uncontrollable and the society suffers (Ndu, 2000).

Lack of basic infrastructure in most rural communities and urban slums in Nigeria, such as no access to potable water, health facilities, electricity, communication facilities, industries, and commercial facilities, among others, has led to social unrest and youth restiveness in Nigeria (Zakaria, 2006). Inadequate educational opportunities and resources make thousands of Nigerian youths roam the streets in cities since many of them could not afford to go to school, they drop out. With this trend, the youths who felt denied educational opportunities become restive (Zakaria, 2006).

Inadequate communication and information flow has also caused youth restiveness in our society. The ineffective communication from political leaders and false teachings by parents influence the restive youth to choose the wrong way of life. Ofem and Ajayi (2008) noted that youth restiveness is associated with lack of humanitarian and social welfare, lack of good governance, corrupt practices of government officials, ethnic crisis, and political instability. This indicates that the causes of youth restiveness are multifaceted in nature. It therefore means that curbing youth restiveness might also take a multidimensional approach. Youth restiveness in recent years has been linked with youths in the Niger-Delta and Northern parts of Nigeria, where kidnapping, armed robbery, hostage-taking, and destruction of lives and properties are paramount.

The invasion of the multinational oil companies by restive youths in the Niger-Delta, the abduction and kidnapping of foreign nationals working in oil companies, the incessant harassment of traders in Lagos, and everyday clashes in some parts of Nigeria are outcomes of youth restiveness in the country (Mutiba, 2011).

Scholars observe that successive administrations in Nigeria have not allocated much to the need of youth, and, worse still, the meager allocation are often diverted by government officials to their private accounts and projects. Thus, youths are restive and agitated when they perceive that resources meant for them are being wasted by those in authority (Anasi, 2010).

NIGER DELTA REGION

The Niger Delta region of Nigeria encompasses the States of Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo, and Rivers. The region boasts a rich ecological diversity, including rivers, creeks, estuaries, swamps, and a wealth of natural resources such as palm oil, palm kernel, fish, oil, and gas. The local economy primarily revolves around farming, fishing, salt making, hand-dug boat construction, and distillation of local gin. The abundant oil and gas reserves in the Niger Delta have attracted numerous multinational companies like Chevron, Shell, and Mobil Producing (ExxonMobil) to cities such as Port Harcourt, Warri, and Yenagoa. Despite the economic benefits that oil has brought to Nigeria, its discovery has turned into a nightmare for the local populace of the Niger Delta. The people of the region have long argued that, despite the significant contributions of oil to the national economy, the exploration and extraction activities have not translated into improved living standards for them. They face unmet basic needs and the destruction of traditional livelihoods like farming and fishing due to environmental degradation from oil activities. This degradation has led to increased poverty and youth unemployment. The stark contrast between the region's wealth and the widespread poverty has fueled youth restiveness. This unrest has escalated into violence, arson, and lawlessness, with a high incidence of kidnapping oil workers, occupying oil sites, seizing facilities, vandalizing oil installations, engaging in armed resistance against the state, and the emergence of militia groups (Edeh, 2018).

RESOURCE GOVERNANCE

The governance of oil wealth in Nigeria has always been intricately linked to the management of the country's resources. The concept of resource management is closely associated with resource control, which fundamentally involves reclaiming ownership, control, and use of resources primarily for the benefit of the local communities and, secondarily, for the overall governance and development of the

nation. In resource-rich countries like Nigeria, especially in the developing world, central governments have traditionally taken charge of managing resource wealth. In Nigeria, the Federal Government controls oil and gas resources, granting exploration and production rights to corporate partners in exchange for a share of the profits and engaging in joint ventures with multinational oil corporations (MNOCs).

According to Onigbinde (2008), the poor management of resources has been a key factor in the Niger Delta crisis. The source explains that decades of neglect by corrupt and oppressive governments, which accumulated vast wealth from the region's resources while ignoring the local population, led to marginalized groups seeking to address the injustices and inequities in resource distribution. Consequently, insurgency became their method of expressing grievances and demanding systemic change. Onigbinde further points out that the Nigerian government's exclusive ownership of oil and gas wealth, established through the Petroleum Act of 1969, the Offshore Oil Revenue Act of 1971, and the Land Use Act of 1978, has remained unchanged for over 50 years, despite the unfairness to landowners. This situation has significantly contributed to the Niger Delta conflict. The Land Use Act of 1978 stipulates that the title to any land where oil is discovered is automatically transferred to the federal government, without adequate compensation to the landowners, exacerbating the conflict (Bisina, 2004).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Area of the Study

The study was carried out within the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The Niger Delta region of Nigeria is also referred to as the oil-bearing region, because it is where almost a hundred percent of Nigeria's crude oil is drawn from. The region is situated within latitudes 05°19′34″N and longitude 06°28′15″E. Covering more than 20,000 square kilometers of swampy terrain along the coastal edges of Nigeria, this region encompasses one of the globe's largest wetland areas. It includes over 60% of Africa's most extensive mangrove forests and is among the world's largest wetlands (Eyinla & Ukpo, 2006).This area of the country is typically considered to be located within nine coastal southern Nigerian States, which include: all six States from the South-South geopolitical zone (Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Edo and Delta States), one State from the South-West geopolitical zone (Ondo State) and two States from the South-East geopolitical zone (Abia and Imo). This study focused on the six States from the South-South geopolitical zone.
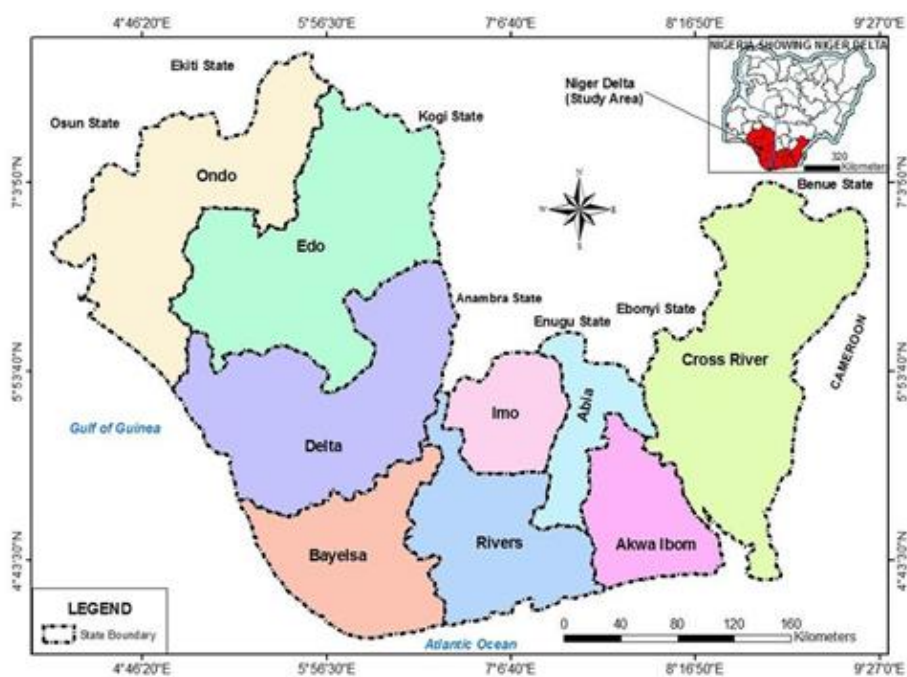

Fig 1. Map of Niger Delta Region showing the Study Area

Source: Oweikeye (2017)

Population of the Study

The population of the study consisted of male and female youth from six selected States in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, approximately estimated to be over 10 million people. These groups were selected because they formed the core of various protesting groups in the region. Female youths, although not directly participating in physical protests, provided support services such as contributing to the purchase of arms and ammunition and cooking or supplying food to their male counterparts who fought in the creeks.

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive design of the survey type to explore the relationship between language management, resource governance, and youth restiveness in the Niger Delta region.

Population and Sample

The population of the study consisted of male and female youths from the six States in the Niger Delta region (Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Edo, Delta, and Rivers). Specifically, the study focused on:

i. Male youths between the ages of 25-45 years (considered opinion leaders in many communities)

ii. Female youths between the ages of 30-35 years

Sampling and Sampling Techniques

The actual population used for the study was 1,105 youths randomly selected in the region. Out of this number, 530 were males, while 575 were females.

Sampling Frame

Table 1: Sample Population of Male and Female Youths in the Niger Delta States by Age Group

Social Indexes	Akwa Ibom	Bayelsa	Cross River	Edo	Delta	Rivers	Total
Male youths between the ages of 25-45 years (they constitute opinion cluster in many communities)	80	60	100	70	90	130	530
Female youths between the ages of 30-35 years	85	62	105	78	95	150	575
Total	**165**	**122**	**205**	**148**	**185**	**280**	**1,105**

Instruments for Data Collection

The major instruments for data collection for the study were the Language Management and Resource Governance Questionnaire (LMARGQ) and oral interviews. Speeches of selected Niger Delta youth were recorded and scripted for analysis, in addition to information derived from the responses in the questionnaire.

Administration of the Instrument

The questionnaires were administered to 530 males and 575 females selected across the 24 Local Government Areas (4 L.G.A. per State for 6 States).

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected using the questionnaire, which included Likert-scale items to capture respondents' attitudes and perceptions. The collected data were analyzed using frequency count, percentage, and mean to answer the research questions raised for the study.

Hypotheses Testing

The study formulated two hypotheses to test using Chi-square statistics of independent samples at a 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Analysis

Research Question 1: Is Language a Panacea to the Problem of Youth Restiveness in the Niger Delta?

Table 2: Language as a Panacea to the Problem of Youth Restiveness in the Niger Delta

S/N	Items	States	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Decision
	Do you believe language is an important tool for resolving conflicts?	Akwa Ibom	66 (40.0)	54 (32.7)	22 (13.3)	23 (13.9)	2.99	Agreed
		Bayelsa	55 (45.0)	42 (34.4)	17 (13.9)	8 (6.6)	3.20	
		Cross River	69 (33.7)	63 (30.7)	40 (19.5)	33 (16.1)	2.82	
		Edo	61 (41.2)	51 (34.5)	22 (14.9)	14 (9.4)	3.07	
		Delta	63 (34.1)	60 (32.4)	30 (16.2)	32 (17.3)	2.83	
		Rivers	101 (36.07)	96 (34.29)	43 (15.36)	40 (14.29)	2.92	
	Do you agree that language plays a key role in addressing youth restiveness?	Akwa Ibom	65 (39.4)	55 (33.3)	22 (13.3)	23 (13.9)	2.98	Agreed
		Bayelsa	56 (45.9)	41 (33.6)	15 (12.3)	10 (8.2)	3.17	
		Cross River	68 (33.2)	60 (29.3)	42 (20.5)	35 (17.1)	2.78	
		Edo	62 (41.9)	48 (32.4)	23 (15.5)	15 (10.1)	3.06	
		Delta	64 (34.6)	58 (31.4)	31 (16.8)	32 (17.3)	2.83	
		Rivers	105 (37.50)	92 (32.86)	46 (16.07)	37 (13.21)	2.95	
	Do you believe that using respectful and empathetic language can reduce youth restiveness?	Akwa Ibom	68 (41.2)	52 (31.5)	22 (13.3)	23 (13.9)	3.00	Agreed
		Bayelsa	54 (44.3)	42 (34.4)	18 (14.8)	9 (7.4)	3.17	
		Cross River	67 (32.7)	62 (30.2)	41 (20.0)	35 (17.1)	2.78	
		Edo	61 (41.2)	50 (33.8)	21 (14.2)	16 (10.8)	3.05	
		Delta	63 (34.1)	60 (32.4)	32 (17.3)	30 (16.2)	2.80	
		Rivers	107 (38.21)	90 (32.14)	43 (15.36)	40 (14.64)	3.0	
	Is it important to avoid vindictive and humiliating	Akwa Ibom	66 (40.0)	52 (31.5)	20 (12.1)	27 (16.4)	2.95	Agreed
		Bayelsa	57 (46.7)	42 (34.4)	14 (11.5)	9 (7.4)	3.20	

	language in situations involving youth restiveness?	Cross River	70 (34.1)	62 (30.2)	38 (18.5)	35 (17.1)	2.81	
		Edo	59 (39.9)	53 (35.8)	19 (12.8)	17 (11.5)	3.04	
		Delta	63 (34.1)	60 (32.4)	31 (16.8)	31 (16.8)	2.83	
		Rivers	110 (39.29)	89 (31.79)	42 (15.00)	39 (14.00)	2.96	
	Can the effective and careful selection of words promote peace?	Akwa Ibom	65 (39.4)	53 (32.1)	22 (13.3)	25 (15.2)	2.95	Agreed
		Bayelsa	56 (45.9)	42 (34.4)	16 (13.1)	8 (6.6)	3.20	
		Cross River	67 (32.7)	65 (31.7)	38 (18.5)	35 (17.1)	2.81	
		Edo	60 (40.5)	52 (35.1)	20 (13.5)	16 (10.8)	3.04	
		Delta	64 (34.6)	60 (32.4)	31 (16.8)	30 (16.2)	2.83	
		Rivers	104 (37.14)	93 (33.21)	42 (15.00)	41 (14.64)	2.93	
	Can open dialogue and effective communication through the careful use of language help in addressing youth restiveness in the Niger Delta?	Akwa Ibom	68 (41.2)	50 (30.3)	22 (13.3)	25 (15.2)	2.95	Agreed
		Bayelsa	57 (46.7)	41 (33.6)	16 (13.1)	8 (6.6)	3.19	
		Cross River	66 (32.2)	64 (31.2)	40 (19.5)	35 (17.1)	2.80	
		Edo	62 (41.9)	51 (34.5)	20 (13.5)	15 (10.1)	3.05	
		Delta	65 (35.1)	61 (33.0)	30 (16.2)	29 (15.7)	2.81	
		Rivers	116 (41.42)	101 (36.07)	33 (11.78)	30 (10.71)	3.08	
	Do you think that language interventions, without addressing economic and social factors, can fully eliminate youth restiveness in the Niger Delta?	**Akwa Ibom**	28 (17.7%)	25 (15.8%)	60 (37.9%)	45 (28.4%)	2.23	Disagreed
		Bayelsa	22 (18.0%)	20 (16.4%)	65 (53.3%)	15 (12.3%)	2.40	
		Cross River	18 (9.3%)	34 (17.5%)	82 (42.2%)	60 (30.9%)	2.06	
		Edo	23 (15.5%)	30 (20.3%)	55 (37.2%)	40 (27.0%)	2.10	
		Delta	25 (13.5%)	33 (17.8%)	70 (37.8%)	57 (30.8%)	2.08	
		Rivers	32 (11.4%)	47 (16.8%)	88 (31.4%)	113 (40.4%)	1.98	

Mean score equals or above 2.50 is Agreed, Mean score below 2.50 is Disagreed

In Akwa Ibom, a significant proportion of respondents (66 or 40.0%) strongly agree that language is an important tool for resolving conflicts and 54 (32.7%) agree, making a total of 72.7%. This consensus reflects a general agreement on the effectiveness of language in conflict resolution, despite 22 (13.3%) expressing disagreement and 23 (13.9%) strongly disagreeing. Bayelsa shows an even stronger agreement, with 55 (45.0%) strongly agreeing and 42 (34.4%) agreeing, totaling 79.4%. This

suggests a robust belief in the power of language within this state. In contrast, Cross River has a lower level of agreement, with only 33.7% strongly agreeing and 30.7% agreeing, totaling 64.4%. Edo also indicates a strong agreement with 41.2% strongly agreeing and 34.5% agreeing, leading to a combined agreement of 75.7%. Delta and Rivers, with 66.5% and 70.3% agreeing respectively, also highlight a significant belief in language's role, although Rivers has a higher percentage of disagreement (29.7%).

Regarding the role of language in addressing youth restiveness, Akwa Ibom again shows a majority agreeing, with 65 (39.4%) strongly agreeing and 55 (33.3%) agreeing, totaling 72.7%. Bayelsa exhibits even greater agreement, with 56 (45.9%) strongly agreeing and 41 (33.6%) agreeing, making 79.5% in favor. Cross River's support is lower at 33.2% strongly agreeing and 29.3% agreeing, leading to a total agreement of 62.5%. In Edo, 41.9% strongly agree and 32.4% agree, reflecting a 74.3% consensus. Delta and Rivers show similar trends, with 66% and 70.3% agreeing respectively, indicating a general acceptance of language's role in addressing youth restiveness.

When it comes to using respectful and empathetic language to reduce youth restiveness, Akwa Ibom shows 68 (41.2%) strongly agreeing and 52 (31.5%) agreeing, totaling 72.7%. Bayelsa also demonstrates a strong belief, with 54 (44.3%) strongly agreeing and 42 (34.4%) agreeing, leading to 78.7% in support. Cross River has 32.7% strongly agreeing and 30.2% agreeing, totaling 62.9%. Edo shows 41.2% strongly agreeing and 33.8% agreeing, reflecting a total of 75%. Delta and Rivers, with 66.5% and 70.3% respectively, also agree that respectful and empathetic language can reduce restiveness.

The importance of avoiding vindictive and humiliating language is also widely supported. In Akwa Ibom, 66 (40.0%) strongly agree and 52 (31.5%) agree, resulting in a 71.5% total agreement. Bayelsa shows the highest agreement with 57 (46.7%) strongly agreeing and 42 (34.4%) agreeing, totaling 81.1%. Cross River has 34.1% strongly agreeing and 30.2% agreeing, resulting in 64.3%. In Edo, 39.9% strongly agree and 35.8% agree, making 75.7% in favor. Delta and Rivers show 66.5% and 71.1% respectively, indicating widespread support for avoiding vindictive language.

Regarding the potential of careful word selection to promote peace, Akwa Ibom shows a significant level of agreement with 65 (39.4%) strongly agreeing and 53 (32.1%) agreeing, totaling 71.5%. Bayelsa has 56 (45.9%) strongly agreeing and 42 (34.4%) agreeing, reflecting 80.3% agreement. Cross River's support is lower with 32.7% strongly agreeing and 31.7% agreeing, leading to a total of 64.4%. In Edo, 40.5% strongly agree and 35.1% agree, resulting in 75.6% in agreement. Delta and Rivers have 66.5% and 70.3% agreeing respectively, demonstrating a strong belief in the power of careful word selection for promoting peace.

When considering whether open dialogue and effective communication through careful language can help address youth restiveness, Akwa Ibom shows 68 (41.2%) strongly agreeing and 50 (30.3%) agreeing, totaling 71.5%. Bayelsa also supports this view with 57 (46.7%) strongly agreeing and 41 (33.6%) agreeing, resulting in 80.3%. Cross River has 32.2% strongly agreeing and 31.2% agreeing, reflecting a total of 63.4%. In Edo, 41.9% strongly agree and 34.5% agree, leading to 76.4%. Delta and Rivers, with 68.1% and 77.5% agreeing respectively, highlight the importance of effective communication in addressing youth restiveness.

Finally, regarding whether language interventions alone can fully eliminate youth restiveness without addressing economic and social factors, the majority across all states express disagreement. In Akwa Ibom, only 17.7% agree, while 82.3% disagree. Bayelsa has 18.0% agreement and 82.0% disagreement. Cross River shows a strong disagreement with only 9.3% agreeing and 90.7% disagreeing. Edo, Delta, and Rivers also show high levels of disagreement, with 84.5%, 85.6%, and 72.6% respectively, indicating a belief that language interventions are insufficient on their own to address the complex issue of youth restiveness.

Research Question 2: Can Resource Governance Help Curb Youth Restiveness in Niger Delta?

Table 3: Resource Governance for Curbing Youth Restiveness in Niger Delta?

S/N	Items	States	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Decision
	Improved resource governance practices can significantly reduce youth restiveness in the Niger Delta.	Akwa Ibom	68 (41.2)	50 (30.3)	22 (13.3)	25 (15.2)	2.98	Agreed
		Bayelsa	55 (45.0)	44 (35.2)	15 (12.0)	8 (6.6)	3.20	
		Cross River	65 (31.7)	70 (34.1)	35 (17.1)	35 (17.1)	2.80	
		Edo	60 (40.5)	52 (35.1)	20 (13.5)	16 (10.8)	3.05	
		Delta	64 (34.6)	60 (32.4)	31 (16.8)	30 (16.2)	2.85	
		Rivers	120 (42.8)	100 (35.7)	30 (10.71)	25 (8.92)	3.09	
	Equitable distribution of resources is essential to curbing youth restiveness in the Niger Delta.	Akwa Ibom	64 (38.8)	54 (32.7)	22 (13.3)	25 (15.2)	3.08	Agreed
		Bayelsa	55 (45.0)	44 (36.1)	15 (12.0)	8 (6.6)	3.20	
		Cross River	68 (33.2)	63 (30.7)	39 (19.0)	35 (17.1)	2.80	
		Edo	59 (39.9)	51 (34.5)	22 (14.9)	16 (10.8)	3.01	
		Delta	63 (34.1)	60 (32.4)	32 (17.3)	30 (16.2)	2.84	
		Rivers	114(40.7)	95(33.9)	39(13.9)	32(11.4)	3.03	
	Transparency in resource management is crucial for addressing youth restiveness in the Niger Delta.	Akwa Ibom	65 (39.4)	54 (32.7)	23 (13.9)	23 (13.9)	2.98	Agreed
		Bayelsa	56 (45.9)	42 (34.4)	16 (13.1)	8 (6.6)	3.20	
		Cross River	69 (33.7)	63 (30.7)	38 (18.5)	35 (17.1)	2.81	
		Edo	60 (40.5)	50 (33.8)	22 (14.9)	16 (10.8)	3.04	
		Delta	62 (33.5)	61 (33.0)	32 (17.3)	30 (16.2)	2.84	
		Rivers	101(36.0)	103(36.7)	48(17.1)	28(10)	2.98	
	Involving youth in resource governance decisions will decrease their restiveness in the Niger Delta.	Akwa Ibom	67 (40.6)	51 (30.9)	21 (12.7)	26 (15.8)	2.96	Agreed
		Bayelsa	56 (45.9)	43 (35.2)	15 (12.3)	8 (6.6)	3.20	
		Cross River	69 (33.7)	63 (30.7)	39 (19.0)	34 (16.6)	2.81	
		Edo	60 (40.5)	52 (35.1)	21 (14.2)	15 (10.1)	3.06	
		Delta	63 (34.1)	59 (31.9)	33 (17.8)	30 (16.2)	2.84	
		Rivers	134 (47.8)	110 (39.3)	32 (11.4)	23 (8.21)	3.40	
	Do you believe that	**Akwa Ibom**	22 (14.2%)	35 (22.6%)	50 (32.3%)	48 (31.0%)	2.20	Disagreed

							Mean	
	the current resource governance policies in the Niger Delta effectively address youth restiveness in the region.	**Bayels**a	20 (16.4%)	28 (23.0%)	60 (49.2%)	14 (11.5%)	2.25	
		Cross River	26 (12.9%)	30 (14.9%)	80 (39.8%)	65 (32.3%)	2.10	
		Edo	15 (10.1%)	40 (27.0%)	60 (40.5%)	33 (22.3%)	2.26	
		Delta	18 (9.7%)	35 (18.9%)	75 (40.5%)	57 (30.8%)	2.08	
		Rivers	24 (9.0%)	50 (18.7%)	110 (41.0%)	84 (31.3%)	2.10	
	Corruption in resource governance significantly contributes to youth restiveness in the Niger Delta.	Akwa Ibom	65 (39.4)	55 (33.3)	20 (12.1)	25 (15.2)	2.97	Agreed
		Bayelsa	56 (45.9)	40 (32.8)	16 (13.1)	10 (8.2)	3.16	
		Cross River	70 (34.1)	60 (29.3)	40 (19.5)	35 (17.1)	2.80	
		Edo	61 (41.2)	49 (33.1)	22 (14.9)	16 (10.8)	3.05	
		Delta	64 (34.6)	60 (32.4)	30 (16.2)	31 (16.8)	2.85	
		Rivers	110 (39.3)	90 (32.1)	45 (16.1)	35 (12.5)	2.98	
	Introducing specific policies in resource governance can mitigate youth restiveness in the Niger Delta.	Akwa Ibom	66 (40.0)	54 (32.7)	24 (14.5)	21 (12.7)	3.15	Agreed
		Bayelsa	56 (45.9)	41 (33.6)	16 (13.1)	9 (7.4)	3.18	
		Cross River	65 (31.7)	64 (31.2)	41 (20.0)	35 (17.1)	2.78	
		Edo	59 (39.9)	51 (34.5)	21 (14.2)	17 (11.5)	3.30	
		Delta	65 (35.1)	62 (33.5)	28 (15.1)	30 (16.2)	2.88	
		Rivers	108 (38.6)	97 (34.6)	40 (14.3)	35 (12.5)	2.99	
8.	To what extent do you agree or disagree that the youth in the Niger Delta are unaffected by transparency and accountability in resource governance?	**Akwa Ibom**	25 (15.2%)	30 (18.2%)	60 (36.4%)	50 (30.3%)	2.20	Disagreed
		Bayelsa	18 (14.8%)	22 (18.0%)	55 (45.1%)	27 (22.1%)	2.30	
		Cross River	28 (13.7%)	25 (12.2%)	80 (39.0%)	72 (35.1%)	2.05	
		Edo	20 (13.5%)	25 (16.9%)	60 (40.5%)	43 (29.1%)	2.15	
		Delta	24 (13.0%)	30 (16.2%)	65 (35.1%)	66 (35.7%)	2.07	
		Rivers	35 (12.5%)	40 (14.3%)	90 (32.1%)	115 (41.1%)	1.98	

Mean score equals or above 2.50 is Agreed, Mean score below 2.50 is Disagreed

The survey data reveals a strong consensus across all States in the Niger Delta that improved resource governance practices can significantly reduce youth restiveness. In Akwa Ibom, 41.2% of respondents strongly agree with this sentiment, while 30.3% agree, leading to a mean score of 2.98, indicating widespread support. Bayelsa reflects even stronger agreement, with 45.0% strongly agreeing and 35.2% agreeing, resulting in a mean score of 3.20. Cross River shows 31.7% of respondents strongly

agreeing and 34.1% agreeing, with a mean score of 2.80. Edo has a mean score of 3.05, with 40.5% strongly agreeing and 35.1% agreeing. In Delta, 34.6% strongly agree, and 32.4% agree, yielding a mean score of 2.85. Rivers displays a robust agreement as well, with 42.8% strongly agreeing and 35.7% agreeing, resulting in a mean score of 3.09. These figures across the States underscore a broad acknowledgment of the importance of improved resource governance in curbing youth restiveness in the region.

The equitable distribution of resources is also viewed as essential in mitigating youth restiveness, with respondents across all States expressing significant agreement. In Akwa Ibom, 38.8% of respondents strongly agree, and 32.7% agree, leading to a mean score of 3.08. Bayelsa shows similar strong support with 45.0% strongly agreeing and 36.1% agreeing, achieving a mean score of 3.20. Cross River reports a mean score of 2.80, with 33.2% strongly agreeing and 30.7% agreeing. In Edo, 39.9% strongly agree and 34.5% agree, resulting in a mean score of 3.01. Delta's respondents yield a mean score of 2.84, with 34.1% strongly agreeing and 32.4% agreeing. Rivers, with a mean score of 3.03, shows 40.7% strongly agreeing and 33.9% agreeing. These findings emphasize the critical role of equitable resource distribution in addressing the causes of youth restiveness across the Niger Delta.

Transparency in resource management is recognized as crucial for addressing youth restiveness, with considerable agreement across the States. In Akwa Ibom, 39.4% strongly agree, and 32.7% agree, resulting in a mean score of 2.98. Bayelsa, with a mean score of 3.20, sees 45.9% strongly agreeing and 34.4% agreeing. Cross River has a mean score of 2.81, with 33.7% strongly agreeing and 30.7% agreeing. Edo reflects a mean score of 3.04, with 40.5% strongly agreeing and 33.8% agreeing. Delta shows a mean score of 2.84, with 33.5% strongly agreeing and 33.0% agreeing. Rivers, with a mean score of 2.98, reports 36.0% strongly agreeing and 36.7% agreeing. These figures indicate a widespread belief that transparency in managing resources is a vital element in reducing youth grievances and promoting peace in the region.

Involving youth in resource governance decisions is another strategy seen as vital for decreasing youth restiveness. In Akwa Ibom, 40.6% strongly agree, and 30.9% agree, resulting in a mean score of 2.96. Bayelsa shows a high level of agreement with a mean score of 3.20, with 45.9% strongly agreeing and 35.2% agreeing. Cross River, with a mean score of 2.81, has 33.7% strongly agreeing and 30.7% agreeing. Edo reflects a mean score of 3.06, with 40.5% strongly agreeing and 35.1% agreeing. In Delta, 34.1% strongly agree and 31.9% agree, leading to a mean score of 2.84. Rivers shows the strongest agreement, with 47.8% strongly agreeing and 39.3% agreeing, resulting in a mean score of 3.40. These responses suggest a general consensus that involving youth in governance decisions could significantly reduce restiveness in the Niger Delta.

There is a notable disagreement among respondents regarding the effectiveness of current resource governance policies in addressing youth restiveness. In Akwa Ibom, 31.0% strongly disagree and 32.3% disagree, resulting in a low mean score of 2.20. Bayelsa shows a similar trend, with 49.2% disagreeing and a mean score of 2.25. Cross River reflects a mean score of 2.10, with 39.8% disagreeing and 32.3% strongly disagreeing. Edo reports a mean score of 2.26, with 40.5% disagreeing and 27.0% agreeing. Delta has the lowest mean score of 2.08, with 40.5% disagreeing and 30.8% strongly disagreeing. Rivers, with a mean score of 2.10, shows 41.0% disagreeing and 31.3% strongly disagreeing. These low mean scores across the States suggest a widespread perception that the existing policies are inadequate in addressing youth restiveness, indicating the need for significant policy reforms.

Corruption in resource governance is widely recognized as a significant contributor to youth restiveness in the Niger Delta. In Akwa Ibom, 39.4% strongly agree, and 33.3% agree, resulting in a mean score of 2.97. Bayelsa shows the strongest agreement with a mean score of 3.16, with 45.9% strongly agreeing and 32.8% agreeing. Cross River, with a mean score of 2.80, has 34.1% strongly agreeing and 29.3% agreeing. Edo reflects a mean score of 3.05, with 41.2% strongly agreeing and 33.1% agreeing. In Delta, 34.6% strongly agree and 32.4% agree, leading to a mean score of 2.85. Rivers, with a mean score of 2.98, shows 39.3% strongly agreeing and 32.1% agreeing. These

responses highlight the belief that corruption is a major factor in youth restiveness and that addressing this issue is essential for promoting stability in the region.

Introducing specific policies in resource governance is also seen as an effective way to mitigate youth restiveness. In Akwa Ibom, 40.0% strongly agree, and 32.7% agree, resulting in a mean score of 3.15. Bayelsa, with a mean score of 3.18, sees 45.9% strongly agreeing and 33.6% agreeing. Cross River reports a mean score of 2.78, with 31.7% strongly agreeing and 31.2% agreeing. Edo reflects the highest mean score of 3.30, with 39.9% strongly agreeing and 34.5% agreeing. In Delta, 35.1% strongly agree and 33.5% agree, leading to a mean score of 2.88. Rivers, with a mean score of 2.99, shows 38.6% strongly agreeing and 34.6% agreeing. These figures suggest strong support for the idea that targeted interventions and policies in resource governance can effectively address youth restiveness.

There is widespread disagreement with the notion that youth in the Niger Delta are unaffected by transparency and accountability in resource governance. Akwa Ibom shows a mean score of 2.20, with 36.4% disagreeing and 30.3% strongly disagreeing. Bayelsa has a mean score of 2.30, with 45.1% disagreeing and 22.1% strongly disagreeing. Cross River reflects a mean score of 2.05, with 39.0% disagreeing and 35.1% strongly disagreeing. Edo reports a mean score of 2.15, with 40.5% disagreeing and 29.1% strongly disagreeing. In Delta, 35.1% disagree, and 35.7% strongly disagree, resulting in a mean score of 2.07. Rivers shows the lowest mean score of 1.98, with 41.1% strongly disagreeing and 32.1% disagreeing. These low mean scores across all States indicate a strong belief that transparency and accountability in resource governance are indeed significant factors influencing youth restiveness, contrary to the notion that they are unaffected by these issues.

In summary, the survey data reveals a nuanced understanding among respondents across the Niger Delta States regarding the critical role of resource governance in addressing youth restiveness. The results highlight the importance of improved governance practices, equitable resource distribution, transparency, and youth involvement in decision-making processes. There is also a strong sentiment that current policies are insufficient and that specific targeted policies, along with efforts to combat corruption, are necessary to foster peace and stability in the region. The data underscores the need for comprehensive and inclusive approaches to governance that consider the perspectives and needs of the youth in the Niger Delta.

Hypotheses Testing

1. Language management and resource governance do not act as a panacea for curbing youth restiveness in the Niger Delta region.

Table 4: Chi-Square Test for the Association between Language Management and Resource Governance as a Panacea for Curbing Youth Restiveness in the Niger Delta Region

Test	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	118.097	15	.000

The null hypothesis states that language management and resource governance do not act as a panacea for curbing youth restiveness in the Niger Delta region. Given the Chi-Square statistic of 118.10 and a p-value of 4.42e-18, we reject the null hypothesis. This implies that language management and resource governance do have a significant effect on curbing youth restiveness.

2. Language management and resource governance act as a panacea for curbing youth restiveness in the Niger Delta region.

Table 5: Chi-Square Test for the Association between Language Management and Resource Governance as a Panacea for Curbing Youth Restiveness in the Niger Delta Region

Test	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	115.784	15	.000

The alternative hypothesis states that language management and resource governance act as a panacea for curbing youth restiveness in the Niger Delta region. Given the Chi-Square statistic of 115.78 and a p-value of 1.24e-17, we also reject the null hypothesis. This further supports the claim that language management and resource governance significantly influence curbing youth restiveness.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Language management in conflict resolution has been extensively studied, with authors like Jija (2012) and Hayakawa (1991) emphasizing the critical role of language in either mitigating or escalating conflicts. Survey data indicate a strong belief among respondents across Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Edo, Delta, and Rivers States that effective language use can reduce youth restiveness. This finding aligns with the literature, which suggests that the careful selection of words can promote understanding and cooperation, as highlighted by Olerede and Olorede (2015).

For instance, respondents from Bayelsa and Delta showed a high level of agreement on the importance of respectful and empathetic language in reducing tensions. This underscores the value of linguistic strategies, including empathy and respect, in addressing youth restiveness, as emphasized by Gomes de Matos (2006). The data suggest that respondents perceive these strategies as crucial in conflict resolution. The importance of language in conflict resolution is further supported by Akinnawonu (2006), who notes that effective communication is vital in preventing misunderstandings and promoting peaceful coexistence.

In practical terms, the use of language in conflict resolution involves not just the words themselves but also the tone, context, and cultural sensitivity. This is particularly relevant in a diverse region like the Niger Delta, where multiple languages and dialects are spoken. The survey data reflect a nuanced understanding among the respondents that language, when used thoughtfully, can be a powerful tool in defusing tensions and fostering a sense of community. This finding is consistent with the broader literature on communication in conflict settings, which emphasizes the need for careful word choice and the avoidance of inflammatory language (Jija, 2012; Hayakawa, 1991).

Dickson (2015) discusses the significance of non-verbal communication in conflict resolution. This concept is supported by survey results, particularly from respondents in Akwa Ibom, Delta, and Rivers, who rated the effectiveness of non-verbal communication highly. This high rating reflects the belief that actions, such as the provision of social amenities, speak louder than words in resolving disputes. The literature supports this view, suggesting that pragmatic non-verbal cues can bridge gaps where words fail, reinforcing the importance of holistic communication approaches.

Non-verbal communication includes gestures, facial expressions, body language, and even the delivery of physical infrastructure and services, which can signal commitment and care from governing bodies to the communities. In contexts where verbal communication might be met with skepticism or distrust, non-verbal actions can provide a tangible demonstration of goodwill and intention. The survey findings show that respondents appreciate these non-verbal forms of communication as essential components of effective conflict resolution. This aligns with Dickson's (2015) assertion that non-verbal cues are often more reliable indicators of intent and sincerity than verbal statements.

The role of non-verbal communication extends to the symbolic acts of governance, such as the timely and equitable distribution of resources, which can serve as a form of non-verbal communication demonstrating the government's commitment to fairness and justice. Such actions are crucial in building trust and reducing restiveness among youth, who might otherwise feel marginalized or neglected. This perspective is corroborated by the literature on pragmatic communication, which highlights the importance of actions that speak to the lived experiences and needs of the people (Dickson, 2015).

The literature extensively discusses the impact of resource governance on youth restiveness, with Onigbinde (2008) and Bisina (2004) highlighting the negative consequences of poor resource management. Survey findings reveal a strong agreement on the need for equitable resource

distribution across Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Edo, Delta, and Rivers States, aligning with the literature's emphasis on transparency and fairness in resource management to reduce conflict.

In Rivers and Delta States, a significant majority of respondents believe that corruption in resource governance significantly contributes to youth restiveness. This finding is consistent with Gomes de Matos's (2006) arguments which stresses the need for justice and transparency to foster trust and social harmony. The data underscore the critical need for anti-corruption measures in resource management to address youth restiveness effectively.

The issue of resource governance is particularly salient in the Niger Delta, where oil wealth has historically been a source of both prosperity and conflict. The federal control over oil resources, often perceived as exclusionary and exploitative by local communities, has fueled a sense of injustice and deprivation among the youth. The survey data reflect a widespread recognition of these issues, with respondents advocating for more equitable resource sharing and greater local involvement in resource management decisions. This is in line with the findings of Onigbinde (2008) who argues that sustainable peace in the Niger Delta can only be achieved through reforms that ensure fair and transparent management of natural resources.

Additionally, the literature highlights the importance of addressing the socio-economic impacts of resource extraction, which often leaves communities with environmental degradation and limited economic opportunities. Bisina (2004) emphasizes that addressing these broader impacts through comprehensive resource governance policies can help mitigate the factors that drive youth restiveness. The survey data support this view, indicating a strong desire among respondents for policies that not only ensure fair distribution of resource revenues but also address the environmental and social consequences of resource extraction.

The importance of youth involvement in resource governance is highlighted by Okoh (2005) and Kepner and Likubo (1996), who argue that participatory decision-making can lead to more sustainable peace. Survey results show strong support for youth involvement across Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Edo, Delta, and Rivers States, reinforcing the literature's suggestion that inclusive governance can mitigate youth restiveness by providing a platform for young people to voice their concerns and influence decisions.

Youth involvement in governance is not just about inclusion but also about empowerment. When young people are given a voice in decision-making processes, they are more likely to feel valued and invested in the outcomes. This can reduce feelings of alienation and frustration that often lead to restiveness. The literature suggests that participatory governance models, which actively engage youth in dialogue and decision-making, are effective in promoting social stability and reducing conflict (Okoh, 2005; Kepner & Likubo, 1996).

The survey data reveal that respondents see youth involvement as a critical factor in achieving more responsive and accountable governance. This is particularly important in a region like the Niger Delta, where the youth population is large and dynamic. Engaging this demographic in governance processes can harness their energy and creativity towards positive development outcomes. Moreover, involving youth in resource governance can ensure that their unique perspectives and needs are considered in policy-making, leading to more holistic and effective governance solutions.

Youth restiveness is driven by various factors, including marginalization, unequal resource distribution, poor upbringing, and inadequate educational opportunities. Survey data reflect these multifaceted causes across Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Edo, Delta, and Rivers states, with respondents identifying these issues as significant contributors to restiveness. This is consistent with the literature, which argues that a comprehensive approach is needed to address the root causes of youth restiveness, as discussed by Ofem and Ajayi (2008).

Marginalization, both economic and political, is a significant driver of youth restiveness. When young people feel excluded from economic opportunities and political processes, their frustration can manifest in disruptive behaviors. The survey data indicate a strong awareness among respondents of the need to address these forms of marginalization to reduce restiveness. This finding aligns with the

literature, which emphasizes the importance of inclusive policies that provide equitable opportunities for all segments of society (Ofem & Ajayi, 2008).

Education and upbringing also play critical roles in shaping the behaviors and attitudes of youth. The survey data highlight poor educational opportunities as a major factor contributing to youth restiveness across the mentioned States. This is supported by Akinnawonu (2006) who stresses the importance of quality education in providing youth with the skills and perspectives needed to engage constructively in society. Addressing educational disparities and ensuring access to quality education can thus be a vital strategy in mitigating youth restiveness.

Effective communication and information flow are essential in addressing youth restiveness. The literature, including works by Gomes de Matos (2006) and Akinnawonu (2006) highlights the importance of open dialogue in conflict resolution. Survey findings show that a significant majority of respondents across Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Edo, Delta, and Rivers States believe that ineffective communication from political leaders exacerbates restiveness. This finding underscores the need for transparent and honest communication from leaders to build trust and promote peace.

Open communication channels can help bridge the gap between political leaders and the youth, fostering a sense of inclusion and mutual understanding. The literature suggests that when leaders communicate openly and honestly, it helps to build trust and reduces the likelihood of misunderstandings and conflict (Gomes de Matos, 2006). The survey data support this, indicating a strong desire among respondents for more effective communication from their leaders.

Moreover, effective information flow ensures that youth are well-informed about policies, programs, and opportunities that affect them. This can help to reduce feelings of alienation and frustration, which often contribute to restiveness. The literature highlights the role of information in empowering individuals and communities, enabling them to make informed decisions and engage more effectively in governance processes (Akinnawonu, 2006). The survey findings underscore the importance of addressing communication gaps to promote social harmony and reduce youth restiveness.

CONCLUSION

This study underscores the pivotal role of language management and resource governance in mitigating youth restiveness in the Niger Delta. The results indicate that effective language use, characterized by respect and inclusivity, combined with equitable resource governance, can address the underlying causes of youth unrest. Enhanced communication fosters better understanding and cooperation between the government and local communities, while inclusive governance ensures that the benefits of natural resources are fairly distributed. The study advocates for the integration of local communities in decision-making processes and stresses the need for transparent and accountable governance to ensure sustainable peace and development in the Niger Delta.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To address community grievances in the Niger Delta, the government and stakeholders should adopt inclusive and respectful communication methods. This involves training officials in effective communication techniques, promoting the use of local languages during official interactions, and ensuring that all communications are transparent. Such measures will help build trust between the authorities and local communities, making it easier to address concerns and implement policies effectively.

2. Involving local communities in resource governance is another critical strategy. Regular consultations, town hall meetings, and participatory governance frameworks should be implemented to ensure that the voices of local residents, particularly youths and marginalized groups, are heard and considered. When these groups are actively involved in decision-making processes, it fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility, leading to more sustainable and effective governance outcomes.

3. Equitable resource distribution is essential for the well-being of the Niger Delta region. Policies must be implemented to ensure that resources derived from the region's natural wealth are

distributed fairly. This includes providing adequate compensation for environmental damages caused by resource extraction, investing in local infrastructure, and creating economic opportunities that are specifically tailored to meet the needs of the youth. Such measures will help address the economic disparities that often fuel unrest in the region.

4. Improving governance structures to enhance transparency and accountability in resource management is also crucial. Establishing independent monitoring bodies, enforcing strict anti-corruption measures, and ensuring that resource revenues are used for community development are key steps in this process. By strengthening these structures, the government can ensure that the benefits of resource extraction are shared more equitably, which can help reduce tensions and foster a more stable and prosperous region.

5. Conflict resolution programs that emphasize dialogue and negotiation should be developed to address the various conflicts in the Niger Delta. These programs should involve community leaders, youth representatives, and government officials working together to find peaceful solutions. By encouraging open communication and collaboration, these programs can help resolve disputes before they escalate into violence, promoting a more peaceful and cooperative environment in the region.

6. Youth empowerment initiatives are critical to reducing restiveness and promoting active participation in regional development. Investing in education, vocational training, and employment programs will equip the Niger Delta youth with the skills and opportunities they need to succeed. By empowering the youth, these initiatives can help reduce unemployment and poverty, which are often root causes of unrest, and contribute to the long-term stability and prosperity of the region.

7. Finally, environmental management must be a priority in the Niger Delta. Stringent regulations on oil extraction activities should be enforced to minimize environmental damage, and significant investments should be made in environmental restoration projects. A clean and healthy environment is essential for the well-being and livelihoods of local communities and by taking these steps, the government can help ensure that the region's natural resources are managed in a way that benefits both the people and the environment.

By implementing these recommendations, the government and stakeholders can foster a more harmonious and prosperous Niger Delta, effectively curbing youth restiveness through strategic language management and resource governance.

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