

**BARRIERS TO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENTAL
PROJECTS: A NIGERIAN COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE (CASE STUDY
OF THE GBARAN-UBIE OIL AND GAS PROJECT).**

An academic research dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

of

RHODES UNIVERSITY: RHODES BUSINESS SCHOOL

by

Emmanuel Akoh

Supervised by:

Ms. Leticia Greyling

December 2011

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere gratitude goes to God Almighty for giving me the wisdom, knowledge and all the support I needed to complete this study. I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to my parents Mr and Mrs Lawrence Agabus Akoh, my brothers (Ben and Harrison), my sisters (Mercy and Grace) for their unconditional love, support and motivation throughout my academic and professional journey.

I would also want to thank the MBA Class of 2009, for their constant motivation and determination. This study began to take shape in those magnificent syndicate times. They all have been my greatest encouragement for not dropping out of this MBA journey. Thanks for the late night scholarly discussions and for sharing your great minds.

My supervisor, Ms Leticia Greyling, your knowledge, intellectual capacity and constructive criticism was outstanding. Thanks for everything you helped with.

I also would like to thank all the respondents to the research questionnaires for their willingness to complete them; without whom, this research would not have been possible.

I acknowledge the effort of Tafadzwa Mutengwa (Aka BEEF) for reading through my statistical data and making necessary contributions.

Finally, I would like to thank all my colleagues, friends and well-wishers for their interest, courage, jokes and support throughout this process. I thank you all!

Integrative summary

Over the years, there has been an increasing need to use public involvement to address some of the environmental issues associated with developmental projects because of the immediate impact they have on the public, making public participation in such projects an important tool to utilize. According to Richardson and Razzaque (2005: 1), “public participation in environmental decision-making has become an indelible feature of many environmental regulatory systems world-wide over the past few decades”. Richardson and Razzaque (2005) further emphasized that as the public becomes increasingly aware of their human rights, it increases their desire to be involved in decision making that concerns them. Hence, public participation has become an important tool in national and international policy development to ensure that people who are directly or indirectly affected by developmental projects are involved in the decision making process (Reed, 2008).

The conflicts in the Nigerian Niger delta region between oil companies, government and local communities have lasted several years, and have affected revenue generation to both the government and the oil companies (Idemudia, 2007). The environmental issues caused by the extraction of oil and the neglect in the local communities are the main reasons behind the dispute (Ibeanu, 2000). The region contributes the most to the nation’s wealth but has not benefited from these contributions, as the region is increasingly faced with poverty and underdevelopment (Ikelegbe, 2001).

The increasing environmental pollution and the reduction in the sources of livelihood in the Niger delta region, communities began to protest peacefully against the oil companies and the government which became violent overtime (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004). One of the ways in which oil companies and the government tried to solve the problem was to develop projects that were more of community assistance (e.g. water project or community clinic). However, this was seen more as a public service that had nothing to do with host communities contributing and actively participating in the real environmental decisions (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004). In other to solve the restiveness in the Niger Delta region, there must be strategies that go beyond providing basic infrastructures to engaging communities and making them to contribute and to actively participate in environmental decisions that affect them (Oyefusi, 2008).

Therefore, the overall aim and objective of this research is to investigate and contribute to the understanding of the factors that may hinder community involvement in developmental projects in the Niger Delta region, using the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project as a case study. The goals of this research were: (1) Identify and highlight potential barriers to adequate community involvement in developmental projects. (2) Provide empirical evidence to the potential barriers to adequate community involvement from the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project as a case study. (3) Reveal opportunities for achieving greater involvement in developmental projects process from a community perspective.

The research followed the interpretive case study approach. The Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project was used as a case study for this research because it is one of the most recent mega-development projects in the Niger delta (Shell Nigeria, 2010). This research adopted both a qualitative and quantitative method. However, the quantitative method was used to elaborate the qualitative method and to provide a better understanding of the barriers to community involvement. Hence, this research is more of qualitative as it seeks to understand a true-life situation, while the quantitative method is used to buttress the findings from the qualitative method.

This research was conducted in three local Niger Delta communities (Zamara, Gbaran and Koroama), chosen for their proximity to the case study and their accessibility to the researcher. A total of 45 participants were used for this research: 15 participants in Zamara, 18 participants in Gbaran, and 12 participants in Koroama. The participants were selected from each of the three communities through a purposive sampling technique and the availability and willingness to participate in the research. Participants were also selected based on their age group, gender and their level of awareness/participation in the case study. Although, the sample size seemed small and is not a representation of the Niger Delta people, it is however illustrative. The small sample size was as a result of the unwillingness of the people to participate due to the tension in the region. The resultant sample size of 45 participants is assumed to be significantly useful under the circumstance.

An extensive document review was used as a data collection technique to examine available literatures on public participation. The literature was used to examine the concept of public participation; to describe the rationale for public participation; to identify the different types and

some of the international guidelines for public participation; to identify the barriers to public participation in literature; and how it is applicable in the context of the case study.

The main source of data collection for this research was through questionnaires which consisted of five sections that required respondents to provide their personal information, their awareness and levels of participation in the project. The questionnaire was categorised into various barriers in the last section and respondents were asked, using a scale of 1 to 5, to highlight which of the barriers they considered as important based on their answers in the previous sections of the questionnaire (Appendix 1). Furthermore, open-end questions were provided for them to elaborate their experiences in their participation. The data were analysed using tables and graphical representations to show the perceptions of the participants on community involvement in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project.

Furthermore, this research concentrated on the common tests designs such as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability which are necessary for qualitative research to meet required standard. To achieve credibility, the researcher personally monitored the process and ensured transparency by clearly describing the goals and objectives of the study. The researcher also ensured that all findings were accurately recorded. Transferability was also upheld by ensuring that the study actually investigated what was stated in the goals and objectives of the study. It clearly described the research context, process and presented the findings in a manner that encouraged transferability. Also, the test of dependability was achieved by ensuring that the research questions were clear and appropriate. The researcher ensured that details of the collection and analysis of data were also provided and the findings of the research were actually dependent on the data. Finally, the researcher ensured that multiple sources of data collection were employed to follow confirmability and the data were analysed using different techniques.

The research concluded by emphasizing that although in literature many benefits and attention has been given to public involvement in decision making for developmental projects, there are formidable barriers to involvement. The data in the research showed that the lack of adequate information; a lack of resources; a lack of equal opportunity to participate; a lack of impact in the ultimate decision; and a lack of motivation and interest: were some of the factors that community

members considered to have affected their participation. These findings are consistent with those of the quantitative analysis which revealed that the lack of adequate information; a lack of impact on the ultimate decision; and a lack of equal opportunity to participate, were also the factors considered by the respondents to be the most important reason to their non-participation. Other contributors to non-participation include high poverty level, poor educational level, the high levels of corruption, and the community's late awareness of the implementation of developmental projects. Details of the findings are available in subsequent sections of this report.

Some of the recommendations to ensure adequate community involvement were: the community must be involved early in the decision making process of the project so they can voice their needs and concerns about the project and provide relevant information that may help improve the quality of the project; the medium used to disseminate information about such projects must be in a manner that considers the poor educational level of such people (e.g. written information must be in local languages); there should be a more transparent way of providing funds to facilitate community participation so as to avoid the high level of corruption among the community leaders; there is also the need to provide adequate information to the communities on the need and purpose of the project, and information on the negative and positive impacts of the project; there should also be a medium of giving community members some basic training on such projects to improve their capacity and to improve the opportunity to participate effectively; there should also be some level of feedback from the project implementers to ensure that the contributions by participants are included in the final decision.

Abbreviations and acronyms

B/P	Barrels Per Day
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMoU	Global Memoranda of Understanding
IAP2	International Association of Public Participation
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
MMBP	Millions Barrels Per Day
NNPC	Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation
OPEC	Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Table of content

Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
Integrative summary	iii
Abbreviations and acronyms.....	vii
Table of content	viii
List of Tables	xii
List of Figures	xii
SECTION ONE	1
THE ACADEMIC PAPER.....	1
Abstract	1
1.1 Introduction	2
1.2 Background to the case	3
1.2.1 The Nigerian oil industry	3
1.2.2 The Niger delta and oil exploration	3
1.2.3 Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project	5
1.3 Barriers to adequate public participation: The literature.....	6
1.3.1 Lack of information	7
1.3.2 Lack of resources	7
1.3.3 Opportunity to participate	8
1.3.4 Lack of impact in ultimate decision	8
1.3.5 Motivation and interest to participate	8

1.4	Methodology	9
1.5	An analysis of the community respondents' questionnaire.....	10
1.5.1	Background information of respondents.....	10
1.5.2	Adequacy of information provided.....	16
1.5.3	The effectiveness of the public meetings and workshops.....	19
1.5.4	Motivation and incentive	20
1.6	Responses of non-participants in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project	22
1.7	Respondents' perception of community involvement in the case study	23
1.8	The views for non-participation	27
1.9	Summary and recommendation.....	29
1.10	Limitations.....	31
1.11	Further research	31
1.12	Conclusion.....	31
1.13	References	32
SECTION TWO:		35
LITERATURE REVIEW		35
2.1	Introduction	35
2.2	Background	36
2.2.1	The Nigerian oil industry	36
2.2.2	The Niger Delta region	38
2.2.3	Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project	40
2.3	Defining public participation	41
2.4	Rationale of public participation.....	43
2.5	Types and techniques of public participation.....	45

2.6	Who should participate?.....	46
2.7	Guidelines for best practice for public participation.....	47
2.8	Barriers to adequate public participation	50
2.9	Public participation experience in Nigeria.....	53
2.9.1	Nigeria EIA Decree No. 86 of 1992	53
2.9.2	Community involvement and environmental decision-making in the Niger Delta region	55
2.10	Conclusion.....	57
2.11	References	58
SECTION THREE:.....		62
METHODOLOGY		62
3.1	Introduction	62
3.2	Research Aim and Objectives	62
3.3	Research design.....	63
3.3.1	Research approach	63
3.3.2	Research method.....	63
3.3.3	Qualitative and Quantitative approach.....	64
3.3.4	Research population and sample.....	65
3.3.5	Methods of data collection.....	66
3.3.6	Data analysis	67
3.4	Research procedures followed	68
3.4.1	Credibility	68
3.4.2	Transferability.....	69
3.4.3	Dependability	69
3.4.4	Confirmability.....	70

3.5	Ethical consideration	70
3.6	Conclusion.....	71
3.7	References	72
APPENDICES		74
APPENDIX 1		74
	Questionnaire	74
APPENDIX 2.....		86
	Respondent’s opinion on reasons to non-participation.....	86
APPENDIX 3		87
	Calculated chi-square for each demographic variable and reasons for non-participation	87

List of Tables

Table 1.1: Demographic data of the respondents.....	11
Table 1.2: Awareness and participation levels in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project	14

List of Figures

Figure 1.1: Respondents understanding of the role of public participation in developmental project	12
Figure 1.2: Ways respondents participated in the project.....	15
Figure 1.3: Adequacy of information provided	17
Figure 1.4: The effectiveness of the public meetings and workshops	19
Figure 1.5: Respondents perception on motivation and incentives	20
Figure 1.6: Respondents perspective on opportunity to participate.....	21
Figure 1.7:Non-participants perception on adequacy of information in the project.....	22
Figure 1.8: Respondents views of the importance of selected reasons for non-participation in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project	27
Figure 2.1: Map of Nigeria	37
Figure 2.2: Map of Niger Delta Region, Nigeria	39
Figure 2.3: Aerial view of Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project.....	40

SECTION ONE

THE ACADEMIC PAPER

Abstract

There are several reasons why public involvement in decision making process of developmental projects is necessary. In the literature many benefits and attention has been given to public involvement in decision making for developmental projects. However, there are formidable barriers to involvement and few researches have been conducted to highlight and analyse these barriers to involvement from the community perspective in the case of the Nigerian Niger Delta region. This research was an attempt to provide insights to these barriers using the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project as a case study. The goals of the research were to (1) Identify and highlight potential barriers to adequate community involvement in developmental projects. (2) Provide empirical evidence to the potential barriers to adequate community involvement using the case study. (3) Reveal opportunities for achieving greater involvement in developmental projects process from a community perspective. The research was conducted in three communities (Zamara, Gbaran and Koroama) because of their proximity to the project. Primary data was collected using multiple methodological techniques, including an extensive literature review and the use of questionnaires. The barriers to adequate public participation that were identified include: the lack of adequate information, a lack of resources, a lack of impact in ultimate decision, a lack of equal opportunity to participate and a lack of motivation or interest or time. The results from the respondents' perspective in the questionnaires also confirmed and were consistent with the identified barriers. However, the quantitative data showed that the lack of adequate information, a lack of impact in ultimate decision, and a lack of equal opportunity to participate were considered to be serious impediments to community involvement in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project from the respondent's perspective. Finally, a lack of resources, a lack of motivation or interest or time and other factors (e.g. high poverty level and high illiteracy level) that respondents identified, were not considered as important reason for non-participation in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project.

1.1 Introduction

Over the years, the concept of public participation has been recognised by most institutions as an important component in the decision making process of developmental projects, to ensure that communities affected by a project are given the opportunity to participate (Diduck and Sinclair, 2002). According to Reed (2008: 1), “the complex and dynamic nature of environmental problems requires flexible and transparent decision-making that embraces diversity of knowledge and values”. Public participation requires decision makers to develop a medium where members of the public are directly engaged in the decision making process of developmental projects (Abelson, et al. 2003). Hence, there is an increasing integration of public participation into policies around the world to ensure that an inclusive approach is adopted in environmental decision-making (Reed, 2008).

In the literature, a reasonable attention has been given to public participation in environmental decision making process and emphasis has been on the good intentions of public involvement in developmental projects, little attention has however, been given to factors that may hinder adequate involvement (Diduck and Sinclair, 2002). Diduck and Sinclair (2002), Stinchcombe and Gibson (2001), Botes and Van Rensburg (2000), Richardson and Razzaque (2005) all provide direct and indirect evidences of factors that may hinder public involvement in environmental management.

However, there are few studies that have examined these factors in developmental projects from a community perspective in Niger delta region of Nigeria. Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate and contribute to the understanding of these factors in the oil producing Niger Delta region, using the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project as a case study. The goals of this study were to:

1. To identify and highlight potential barriers to adequate community participation in developmental projects.
2. To provide empirical evidence to the potential barriers to adequate community participation using the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project as a case study.

3. To reveal opportunities for achieving greater participation in developmental projects process from a community perspective.

1.2 Background to the case

1.2.1 The Nigerian oil industry

Oil production started in Nigeria as far back as the 1950s and it is currently estimated that Nigeria has crude oil reserves of about 36 billion barrels and an annual excess expenditure of \$8.0 billion in the upstream sector (Ariweriokuma, 2010). Oyefusi (2007), described Nigeria as one of the leading oil producing country in the world, has high proven reserves in both oil and gas, and a member of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

Ariweriokuma (2010) emphasized that daily oil production in Nigeria has been on an increasing rate since oil was found in commercial quantity in 1958; it has risen overtime from 5,100 b/d in 1958 to 4.5 mmbd in 2010. The Nigerian government depends largely on oil and gas for the nation's revenues, economy and national survival. Ariweriokuma (2010: 168) further stated that "oil and gas account for 40% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 95% of the country's total export revenue and 80% of government revenue".

Despite the enormous revenue generated from oil and gas in Nigeria, the country is enmeshed in poverty. The poverty level has been increasing over the years and a reasonable number of the population cannot feed appropriately (Oyefusi, 2007). The inequality in the sharing of the country's wealth between the rich and the poor is considered as one of the reasons of the increased poverty level in the country (Oyefusi, 2007). Furthermore, natural resource abundance in the country has been associated with slow growth, greater inequality, corruption of political institutions, and most fundamentally, an increased risk of civil conflicts (Oyefusi, 2007).

1.2.2 The Niger delta and oil exploration

The Niger Delta region is known for its wide spread of wetlands, large deposits of oil and gas, and the high volume of oil extraction activities that takes place in the region (Oyefusi, 2007). The region contributes the most to the country's oil revenue and also has the country's gas reserve that is considered to be the next major source of revenue to the country (Oyefusi, 2007).

The region also contains a very high level of biodiversity with different species of plants and animals, including many exotic and unique flowers and birds, and has a serious scarcity of arable land and freshwater (Obi and Rustad, 2011). Also, due to the fragile nature of the Niger Delta environment, oil exploration activities have created a lot of environmental problems (Obi and Rustad, 2011). Aluko (2004), emphasized that oil exploration in the Niger delta region brought incessant oil spills and pollution to the environment, affecting the people's main traditional occupation of farming and fishing. Hence, most people have been deprived of their sources of livelihood and this has led to other socio-economic problems like unemployment and poverty (Oyefusi, 2007). The initial concerns of the Niger Delta communities were basically issues relating to the pollution of their immediate environment and their desire for oil companies to take adequate measures to address the problem (Oyefusi, 2007).

According to Oyefusi (2007), the conflicts that has lasted for so many years in the Niger Delta region has been associated with the inappropriate way oil companies acquired land from the local communities and the inadequate compensation for the negative impact of oil activities on the environment. Oyefusi (2007) further described that at national level, the conflict was centred on the inability of the government to develop a sharing formula for the income generated from oil between the different oil producing communities, and the inability to develop ways that will reduce the environmental impact of oil exploration on the surrounding communities or ensure that compensations are provided for such impacts. However, when the environmental problems persisted and the sources of livelihood of the people were reduced or completely cut-off, communities began to show their grievances initially by organising peaceful protest against oil companies and the government, and then gradually becoming violent (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004).

The oil companies and the government have tried to solve the problem by developing projects that were considered to serve as community assistance (e.g. Water projects or community clinics) (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004). However, this was seen more as a public service and had nothing to do with host communities contributing and participating actively to the real environmental decisions (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004).

Therefore, to solve the problem in the Niger Delta region as it relates to oil production and related development, there must be strategies that go beyond providing basic infrastructures to engaging communities and making them contribute and participate actively in environmental decisions that affects them (Oyefusi, 2008). Hence, this research was an attempt to understand how community members could actively be involved in the decision making process of developmental projects and what factors hindered their participation.

1.2.3 Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project

This section gives a summary of the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project and outlined some of the community involvement methods used during the project. The Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project is a Shell oil and gas developmental project. Shell is the largest producer of oil in Nigeria, controlling about 50% of total production (Obi and Rustad, 2011). According to Shell Nigeria (2011: 1) it was reported that in all, “it has 6,000 kilometres of flow lines and pipelines, 86 oil fields, 1,000 producing wells, 68 flow stations, 10 gas plants and two major export terminals at Bonny and Forcados spread across an area of 30,000 square kilometres in the Niger Delta region, from which nearly one billion barrels of oil were produced daily”.

Although, the oil fields for the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project were discovered in the 1970s, there were little developmental activities that took place because the fields had more of gas, and there was not too much demand for gas at that time (Shell Nigeria, 2011). Shell Nigeria (2011), further stated that oil exploration activities in the site of the project started in 2005 and has been producing at high capacity over the years, and production is expected to increase further when the facility is operating at full capacity.

Shell Nigeria (2011), reported that the project is spread over 650 square kilometres of two of the highest oil producing states in the Niger Delta region (Bayelsa and Rivers states). Shell Nigeria has also reported to have engaged the local communities by providing jobs and identified other benefits the project brings to the local communities such as electricity, water and roads (Shell Nigeria, 2011). It was reported that at the peak of the construction in 2008, 6000 people were employed with 95% Nigerians. Additional 300-500 jobs were said to be created by the gas processing facility (Shell Nigeria, 2011). Shell Nigeria (2011), also reported that the project had

developed measures to ensure that adequate social infrastructure and proper health care services were provided to the communities.

Further, an understanding agreement was signed with oil producing communities to provide funding and other basic infrastructures like road, bridges, portable drinking water, etc (Shell Nigeria, 2011). However, engaging communities in environmental decision making goes beyond providing basic infrastructures and jobs. It requires communities contributing and participating actively to real environmental decision making that affects them (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004). Idemudia (2009) argued that corporate social responsibility offered by oil companies demonstrates the substance of their sociability, but recently community participation is the common approach to address development. Hence, there is the need to understand from the perspective of the community members in order to identify ways that will engage them actively in the decision making process of developmental projects and to understand the barriers that could hinder their participation.

1.3 Barriers to adequate public participation: The literature

The first objective of this research was to identify and highlight factors that could hinder adequate community participation in developmental projects. Hartly and Wood (2005) described effective public participation in developmental projects as the ability for decision makers to create a platform that encourages the public to present their views and concerns about a project and to ensure that their contributions are given due consideration so as to increase the public's acceptability of the decision and improve their awareness on some of the impacts of such projects on the environment. Despite the fact that public participation is considered as an important requirement for developmental project, the process of involving the public is characterised by many potential problems and barriers, which might hinder adequate participation of the public (Stinchcombe and Gibson, 2001).

There are various factors that could be a barrier to the promotion of participatory development. Botes and Van Rensburg (2000), explained that these factors range from the organisations involved to the different cultures and traditions of the members of the public involved in the process, to the methods used in engaging the public, to the logistics that were made available, and so many other factors. However, to answer the first objective of this research, it is important

to identify the barriers to public participation in developmental projects as described in literature. These barriers include: lack of information; lack of resources; lack of impact in the ultimate decision; lack of equal opportunity to participate; and lack of motivation or interest or time. The identified barriers are discussed in detail below.

1.3.1 Lack of information

One of the major factor that hinders public participation as identified by some authors is lack of adequate information. Diduck and Sinclair (2002: 2) described the “dimensions of the problem as inaccessible information; overly technical discourse; and incomplete information”. Stinchcombe and Gibson (2001) further described the problem as the inadequate information and the obvious reservations by project implementers during the different phases of the project, which might be a major hindrance to public participation in projects. Richardson and Razzaque, (2005) described the problem as the inability to understand the technicalities and the lack of clear information about projects, usually affects the ability of the public to make reasonable contributions to the decision making process. Therefore, the accessibility, clarity and the completeness of the information for developmental projects are important tools that will ensure adequate public participation.

1.3.2 Lack of resources

Another barrier that could hinder public participation in developmental projects is lack of resources. Local communities usually lack the resources to develop and equip themselves with facts and knowledge that is needed to challenge project implementers and state authorities on the environmental problems such projects brings to the communities (Diduck and Sinclair, 2002). Richardson and Razzaque (2005: 193) described the problem as the “financial cost to participants for gaining access to information, preparing submission, attending hearings and litigating” could be major hindering factor to their participation.

Adomokai and Sheate (2004), emphasized that the lack of resources available to members of local communities makes it difficult for them to acquire the expertise required to participate effectively in the decision making process of developmental projects. However, the knowledge and experience of communities members could serve as an important tool in ensuring a

comprehensive decision making process of the project (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004). Hence, to solve the problem, it is important to create a system that makes funding available such that participation is encouraged.

1.3.3 Opportunity to participate

A further barrier to adequate public participation in developmental projects is the unequal opportunity to participate. Diduck and Sinclair (2002) described the problem as process deficiencies relating to a few parties controlling and manipulating most of the proceedings during public meetings. The lack of equal opportunity to participate is usually associated with the boundary-setting complexities that project implementers use to control the proceedings and the problem of specifying the responsibilities of the public in order to ensure their valuable involvement in the decision making process of developmental projects (Stinchcombe and Gibson, 2001). Okoh (2005) further described the problem as the fear of conflict in the participation process, which makes project implementers to try to avoid public participation. These factors have resulted in inequality in participation.

1.3.4 Lack of impact in ultimate decision

The information from the public are usually not considered scientific enough to contribute significantly to the decision making process and as such they are disregarded and not given due consideration during the process (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004). According to Diduck and Sinclair (2002), the lack of impact in the ultimate decision of developmental projects is often described as the inability of decision makers to create a platform where proper discussions can take place; the over domination of the elites in the decision making process; and the believe that decisions were already concluded before the public meetings discourages members of the public to participate in the process.

1.3.5 Motivation and interest to participate

Another factor that is considered as a barrier to public participation in developmental projects is the individual interest and motivation to participate in the project. Diduck and Sinclair (2002) described this as a problem of people being too busy; not concerned with the impact of such projects; people pay more attention on how to cope with their immediate problems at work and

home; and unwillingness to participate because they believe others adequately represents their interest. The literature also highlighted that members of the communities lack the interest to get involved in environmental decision making because of the high level of technicalities and overbearing procedures required (Botes and Van Rensburg, 2000, Richardson and Razzaque, 2005).

1.4 Methodology

A multiple methodology technique was used for the collection of data for this study. These included: document reviews (journals, books, and international guidelines for public participation). The primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire. Three local Niger Delta communities (Zamara, Gbaran and Koroama), were involved in the research and were chosen based on their proximity to the case study and the accessibility to the researcher. A total of 45 respondents were used for this research: 15 respondents in Zamara, 18 respondents in Gbaran, and 12 respondents in Koroama.

The participants were selected from each of the three communities through a purposive sampling technique. Availability and the willingness to participate in the research were the key factors used in selecting the participants. Participants were also selected based on their age group, gender and their level of awareness/participation in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project. Although, the sample size seemed small and is therefore not a full representation of the Niger Delta people, it is illustrative. The small sample size was basically because of the tension in the region and the unwillingness to participate. The ability to find 45 participants in this study is considered to be a great success.

The questionnaire for this research consisted of five sections (Appendix 1). Section one consisted of questions that were provided for the personal information of the respondents. Section two consisted of questions that tried to understand the level of participant's awareness and their level of participation in the case study. Section three consisted of questions for respondents that participated in the project process. This was followed by seven open-ended questions that required respondents to elaborate their experience in participating.

Section four consisted of questions that also required respondents to specify some of the important reasons why they did not participate in the project process. This was also followed by six open-ended questions to elaborate on their reason for not participating. In section five, the entire questionnaire were categorised into various barriers and respondents were asked using a scale of 1-5 to highlight which of the barriers they considered as important based on their answers in the previous sections of the questionnaire.

Some of the data were analysed using tables and graphical representations to show the perceptions of the respondents on community involvement in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project. Further, direct quotes from the open-ended questions were used to analyse the perceptions of the respondents. The data in section five of the questionnaire was analysed by grouping them into three classes: scale 4 and 5 were classified to be very important, scale 3 as neutral and scale 1 and 2 as unimportant. Using the grouped data, chi-square test for independence was performed for each of the response options (the categorised barriers) to show the significance from the respondent's perspective. Chi-square statistics was also used to test for independence between the examined demographic variables and the reasons for non-participation. Utts and Heckard (2007), describes chi-square test as a procedure for assessing the statistical significance of a relationship between categorical variables. Probability value (p-value) and a significant level of 0.05 were used to analyse the data. The p-value is used to measure how much evidence we have against a particular subject, while the significant level is used to draw a conclusion in quantitative data testing (Utts and Heckard, 2007)

1.5 An analysis of the community respondents' questionnaire

1.5.1 Background information of respondents

This section presents the key findings identified from the questionnaires. The responses from the respondents were analysed in the context of the barriers identified and how they relate to the case study. These included the following: (1) the provision of adequate information to the community members during the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project; (2) the provision of adequate resources to encourage participation in the project; (3) the response pattern of the community members and how it affects the final decision on the project; (4) the provision of equal opportunity to

encourage participation and; (5) the provision of adequate motivation and interest to encourage participation.

Table 1.1: Demographic data of the respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender:		
Male	33	73.3
Female	12	26.7
Total	45	100
Age:		
16-25 years	7	15.6
26-35 years	18	40
36-45 years	12	26.7
46-55 years	5	11.1
56-65 years	3	6.7
Above 65 years	-	-
Total	45	100
Profession:		
Farmer	20	44.4
Trader	13	28.9
Small scale business	8	17.8
Civil society	4	8.9
Total	45	100
Educational qualification:		
Primary	27	60
Secondary	14	31.1
University	4	8.9
Total	45	100

Table 1.1 presents the demographic data of the respondents involved in the research. It shows that most of them did not have education above the primary level. A total of 60% of the respondents had primary education, 31% had up to secondary and only 9% of the respondents had a diploma or degree. The data showed that the common profession in the communities were farming, trading, small scale businesses and civil society activities (44.4%, 28.9%, 17.8% and 8.9% respectively). Majority of the respondents in this research were above 26 years of age and were considered to be adults. The table further showed that 73.3% of the respondents were men

and 26.7% were women. The fact was buttressed by direct comments from community members who told the researcher that men are usually more active in such projects. In addition, 12 of the respondents participated in the project as against 33 who did not participate, representing a majority of the community members who did not participate in the project.

1.5.1.1 Respondents understanding of the role of public participation in developmental project

Question 1 of the questionnaire examined the respondent's understanding of the concept of public participation (Appendix 1) and it provided background information of the respondents involved in this research.

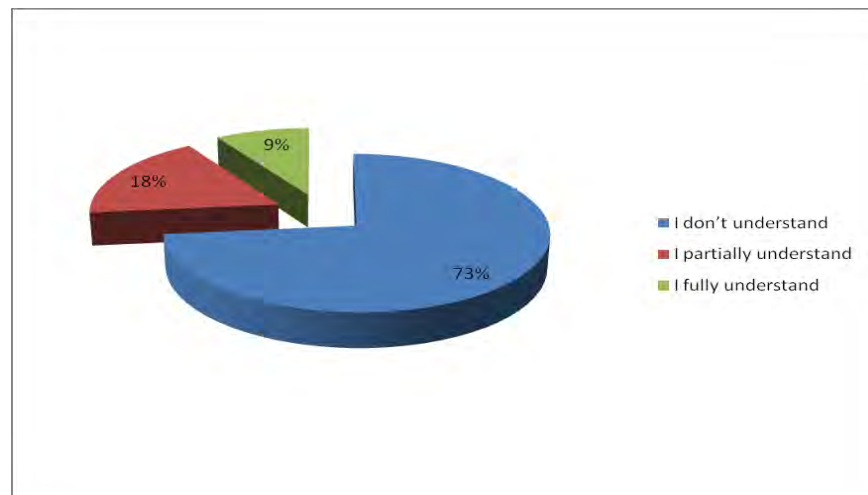


Figure 1.1: Respondents understanding of the role of public participation in developmental project

A total of 73% of the participants did not understand, 18% partly understood and only 9% fully understood the concept of public participation (see figure 1.1). The lack of understanding associated with public participation was a reoccurring theme across the research and an important reason why community members did not participate in developmental project. This is also consistent with the literature which suggests that the excessively technical and bureaucratic procedures in environmental decision making are some of the most consistent problems of public participation (Richardson and Razzaque, 2005). Diduck and Sinclair (2002) likewise emphasised that people need to have some level of training on some of the basic technicalities in developmental projects in order to have a better understanding of the potential requirements and

inputs they can make into such projects. Hence, an initial understanding of the concept and the role they can play in ensuring adequate community involvement is fundamental to active community participation in developmental projects.

1.5.1.2 Awareness and participation levels of respondents in the project

Questions 3, 4, 5 and 6 examined the awareness and participation level of the respondents in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project (table 1.2) and provided further background information of the respondents in the research. The table showed that 80% of the respondents had none or poor awareness level during the pre-feasibility and feasibility stages of the project, while 13.3% had general awareness and 6.7% had a good awareness level. The respondents claimed that their level of awareness improved during the pre-construction and construction stages of the project. A total of 68.9% of the respondents had general and good awareness of the project, while only 31.1% of the respondents had none or poor awareness during the pre-construction stage of the project. The table further showed that 91% of the respondents had general, good and significant awareness of the project during the construction stage because they could see the activities as it progressed at the construction site.

The reoccurring theme of “late awareness” was also consistent with the literature. Okoh (2005) suggested that delay in the involvement of the public could usually lead to time pressure on the project implementers; while the fear of conflicts makes project implementers to avoid public participation. Diduck and Sinclair (2002) described this challenge as process deficiencies because of the inadequate notices of such projects. It is of great importance to ensure that project implementers carry out a proper search for all interested members of the public prior to the beginning of the public involvement process (UNECE, 2010). As a result, and in consistence with the data presented below, late awareness of the project was one of the significant barriers to involvement from the perspective communities.

Table 1.2 further shows that 26.7% of the respondents got to know about the project through various community meetings. Another 15.6% and 11.1% of the respondents claimed to have known about the project through neighbours and friends respectively. A total of 37.8% of the respondents claimed they never heard about the project and another 8.9% heard through other means (e.g. radio).

Table 1.2: Awareness and participation levels in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project

Question Number	Response Percentage				
	No awareness	Poor awareness	General awareness	Good awareness	Significant awareness
2: Rate your level of awareness in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project process	62.2	17.8	13.3	6.7	-
3(a): Indicate your awareness level in pre-feasibility phase of the project	62.2	17.8	13.3	6.7	-
3(b): Indicate your awareness level in feasibility phase of the project	62.2	17.8	13.3	6.7	-
3(c): Indicate your awareness level in pre-construction phase of the project	17.8	13.3	57.8	11.1	-
3(d): Indicate your awareness level in construction phase of the project	-	8.9	22.2	31.1	37.7
4: Rate your level of participation in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project process	No participation	Poor participation	General participation	Good participation	Significant participation
	62.2	17.8	11.1	2.2	6.7
5: How did you get to know about the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project?	Friends	Neighbours	Community meetings	Never heard about it	Others
	11.1	15.6	26.7	37.8	8.9

The research further interrogated the awareness and participation level of respondents in the project as shown in figure 1.2. It showed that 62.2% of the respondents did not participate in any form during the project. A total of 17.8% of the respondents attended workshops and watched planned meetings. Another 15.5% had one-on-one discussion with the project implementer, provided testimony at public hearing and provided written comments by mail or email. A total of 4.4% of the respondents participated in other forms; some of the respondents indicated a combination of two or more options.

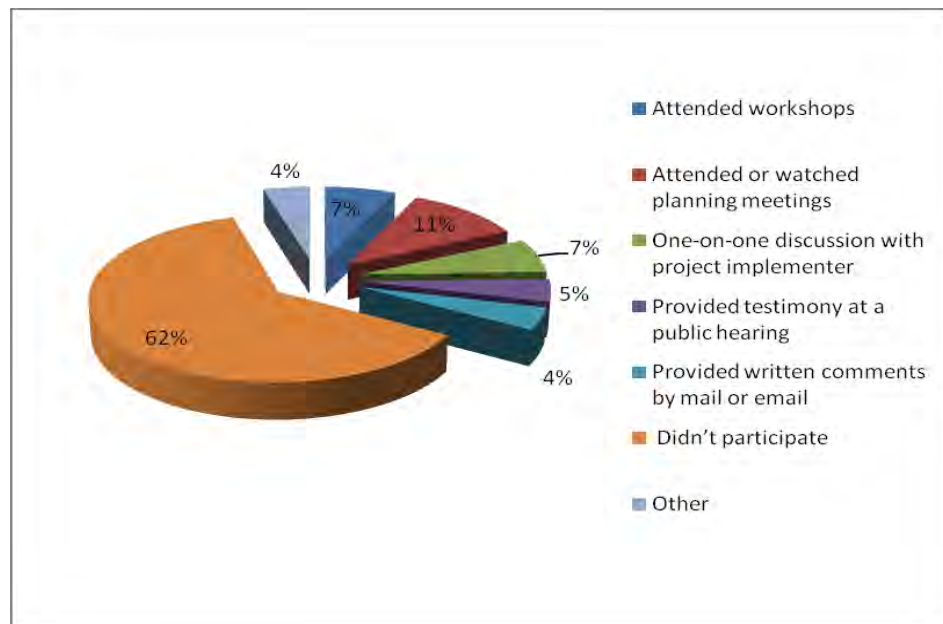


Figure 1.2: Ways respondents participated in the project

Figure 1.2 shows the various techniques that were used during the public involvement process. However, there is a growing consensus in literature that requires project implementers to adopt new techniques that are comfortable, suitable, and agreeable to the participants (Halvorsen, 2001). The goal of identifying participatory techniques in literature that may be comfortable, suitable, and agreeable in environmental decision making is to ensure that decisions are seen as fair, legitimate, and inclusive, thus helping to identify important values and interest of the communities and individuals (Halvorsen, 2001). It is therefore important to identify the techniques of involving the communities that will encourage them to participate and make relevant contributions.

1.5.2 Adequacy of information provided

This section begins to answer the second and third objectives of this research. That is, to provide empirical evidence to the potential barriers to adequate community involvement from the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project as a case study and to reveal opportunities for achieving greater involvement in developmental projects process from a community perspective. Questions 7-13 of the questionnaire investigated the adequacy of information provided to community members during the project (Appendix 1). Figure 1.3 below shows the perception of the respondents that participated in the project.

Seventy five percent of the respondents disagreed that the draft plan of the project was made available to them from the initial stages of the project. A total of 16.7% were neutral and 8.3% of the respondents agreed/strongly agreed. The figure further indicated that most of the respondents received information relating to the project and public meeting through: neighbourhood meetings, public meeting presentations and discussions, Shell website, direct mailing and newspaper articles (41.6%, 25%, 8.3%, 8.3% and 8.3% respectively) and 8.3% of the respondents indicated that they received information to the project via “word of mouth”; some indicated the combination of two or more options.

In addition, the respondents indicated that the means of involvement and getting information that they found useful were: neighbourhood meetings, public meeting presentations and discussions, direct mailing, newspaper articles and Shell website (50%, 16.7%, 8.3%, 8.3%, and 0% respectively) and 16.7% specified “word of mouth” and text messages on their mobile phones; some also indicated the combination of two or more options.

The figure further showed that 83.3% of the respondents did not visit the Shell website even though it provided some project-related information. This is because most of them do not have access to the internet and are not computer literate. A total of 16.6% of the respondents that visited the website indicated that it was useless and deficient in disseminating information about the project to community members.

7: Information on the draft project plan and public meetings was readily available	Response Percentage				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	58.3	16.7	16.7	8.3	-

8: I received information relating to the project and public meeting in the following ways	Response Percentage					
	Shell website	Direct mailings	Newspaper articles	Public meeting presentations and discussions	Neighborhood meetings	Others
	8.3	8.3	8.3	25	41.6	8.3
9: Which means of public involvement and getting information did you find most useful	-	8.3	8.3	16.7	50	16.7

10: If you used the Shell Nigeria website to follow the project, how useful was it at providing information in an efficient and timely manner	Response Percentage				
	Did not visit the website	Useless	Deficient	Sufficient	Exceptional
	83.3	8.3	8.3	-	-
11: Information and materials in the <u>Gbaran-Ubie</u> oil and gas project were understood	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	58.3	16.7	16.7	8.3	-

12: Which pieces of information material was best understood	Response Percentage							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	8.3	8.3	-	16.7	8.3	25	25	8.3
13: Which pieces of information materials were least understood	16.7	25	25	8.3	8.3	16.7	-	-

N.B: Response options for question 12 and 13: 1) Project draft plan 2) Ordinances 3) Maps 4) Reports 5) Memos 6) Public comments 7) Meeting minutes 8) Others

Figure 1.3: Adequacy of information provided

Figure 1.3 also showed that 75% of the respondents (both disagree and strongly disagree) indicated that they understood the information and materials in the project. Another 8.3% of the respondents agreed, while 16.7% were neutral. The figure also indicated that 8.3% of the respondents would have preferred that the materials were written in local languages to aid the reading by the community members. The respondents indicated the information/materials that were best understood as follows: public comments, meeting minutes, reports, project draft plan, ordinances, memos and maps (25%, 25%, 16.7%, 8.3%, 8.3%, 8.3% and 0% respectively).

The figure further shows that 50% of the respondents indicated that maps and ordinances were some of the materials that they least understood because most of them could not make meaning of them. Least understood materials were: project draft plan, public comments, reports, memos and meeting minutes (16.7%, 16.7%, 8.3%, 8.3%, and 0% respectively).

Deficiencies in available information were reoccurring theme in the data presented above that is also consistent with one of the barriers identified in literature (lack of adequate information). Information pertaining to projects like the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project are usually too technical and scientific in nature for local communities such as those involved in the project, making information inaccessible to many of them (Diduck and Sinclair, 2002). According to Diduck and Sinclair (2002, 6):

“Technical and scientific discourses are necessary and desirable in environmental assessments, however, if such discourses are predominate and compounded by process deficiencies such as inaccessible information and lack of participant funding, the technical and scientific nature of discussions will present a formidable barrier to participation”.

Richardson and Razzaque (2005) attributed the problem of information deficiencies to the financial cost to participants for accessing information, preparing submission, attending hearings and litigating, and the cost to project implementers. Therefore, to ensure adequate information are disseminated and well understood during projects like the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas, there is the need to understand the social classes of public involved and information material should be made easy to understand with little or no extra cost.

1.5.3 The effectiveness of public meetings and workshops

Question 14 of the questionnaire (Appendix 1) probed the effectiveness of public meetings and workshops. Some criteria must be present in order that public participation can be considered as effective. These include: The final decision must contain contributions made by the public; member of the public should be given all necessary information that is needed to ensure adequate and meaningful participation; every member of the public that is interested in getting involved, must be given the opportunity to participate; incorporating the widely differing values of different interested members of the public (International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) (2007); United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) (2010)

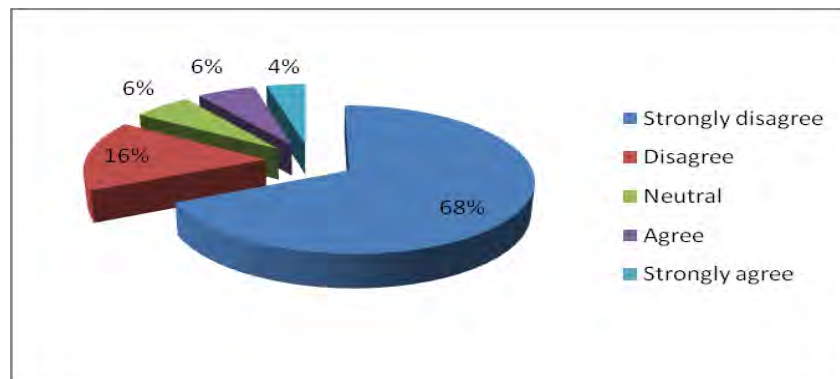


Figure 1.4: The effectiveness of the public meetings and workshops

Figure 1.4 above shows the perception of the participants on the public meetings and workshops. It illustrated that a total of 84% of respondents (either disagree or strongly disagree) indicated that the public meetings and workshops were effective. They claimed that the public meetings and workshops were not well organised and conducted because the meetings usually did not have well defined agenda and purpose, and the elites dominated most of the discussions because they were more outspoken. They further claimed that the methods of disseminating information during the meetings were not clear to the participants and it was hard for them to stick to the main topic of discussion. Twelve percent of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that it was effective, while 4% were neutral. This perception is consistent with the barrier of process deficiencies identified by Smith (2003), who suggested that workshops are meant to be structured

meetings aimed at reviewing information, defining issues, solve problems or to plan reviews. Therefore, the success of workshops in engaging communities largely depends on its design, management, proper organisation and facilitation in such a way that it draws participation from those that would otherwise be left out.

1.5.4 Motivation and incentive

Question 15 of the questionnaire (Appendix 1) further investigated the perception of the respondents on whether the provision of incentives (like transportation to meeting venues, provision of food during meeting, etc) sufficiently motivated and encouraged participation.

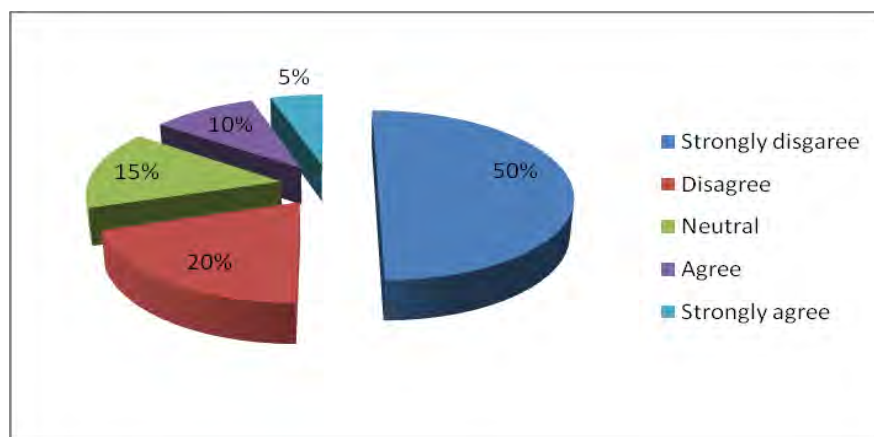


Figure 1.5: Respondents perception on motivation and incentives

Figure 1.5 above illustrates the perception of the respondents on motivation and incentives for the project. It indicated that 70% of the respondents strongly disagreed/disagreed that the public meetings provided enough incentive and motivation to encourage their attendance and contribution. A total of 25% of the respondents agreed, while 5% were neutral. As identified in the literature, a reoccurring theme in the data presented above showed that majority of the respondents would have preferred to continue with their normal lifestyle of focusing on issues of work and home than participating in the project because of their perception that they were not adequately motivated during the project process (Diduck and Sinclair, 2002). Some of the respondents emphasised that the incentives were handed to the community leaders to facilitate community involvement processes and motivate community members to participate but they were diverted for personal use. UNECE (2010) guidelines for best practise of public

participation, stipulates that participants are usually motivated and encouraged to be involved in projects when there are visible results as evidence. Hence, to motivate community members to be involved in developmental projects, there need to be a mechanism that adequately fund poor members of the community to help them develop interest and time to participate, particularly to provide them information that their contribution are indeed producing results.

1.5.6 Opportunity to participate

Question 16 of the questionnaire investigated the perception of the respondents that were involved in the project as in relation to the opportunity they have been provided to participate in the case study. Figure 1.6 below illustrates the perception of the respondents.

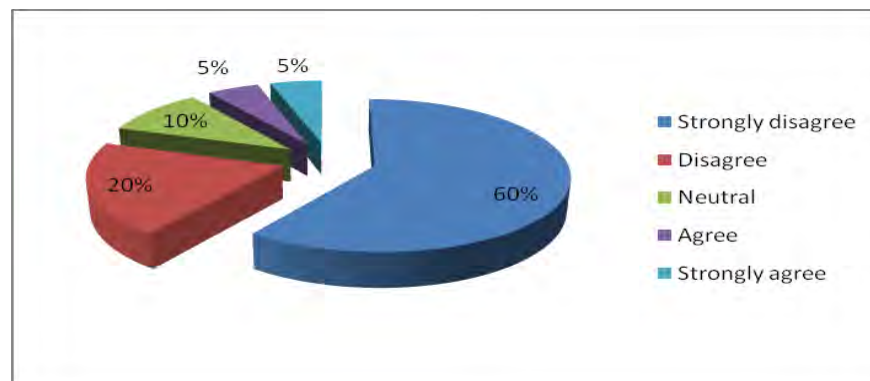


Figure 1.6: Respondents perspective on opportunity to participate

Figure 1.6 illustrates that 80% of the respondents either strongly disagree or disagree that there was enough opportunity to participate in the project. Respondents attributed this to the fact they did not receive adequate information about the project and also because project awareness occurred rather later than sooner, as identified in the sections above. A total of 10% of the respondents agree/strongly agree, while another 10% were neutral.

This is also consistent with one of the barriers identified by Richardson and Razzaque (2005) who suggested that inadequate technical support and the difficulties in accessing clear information could contribute in reducing the ability of the public to make any reasonable contribution in the decision making process. Botes and Van Rensburg (2000) also described this challenge in relation to the nature of the state, citing authoritarianism that is not aimed at

improving the conditions for community participation or modifying the form of decision making as a barrier. Rather, this state maintains existing power it has over the society and uses it to suppress the poor. Therefore, to ensure adequate opportunity to participate, there should be well defined regulations from the beginning of the process, stating how and when participants are going to be involved, and the way their contributions in the process will be utilised.

1.6 Responses of non-participants in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project

25: Information on the draft Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas plan and public meetings were readily available		Response Percentage				
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
		78.8	9.1	12.1	-	-

26: Information relating to the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas, in your opinion, would have been best accessible to you through the following ways	Response Percentage					
	Shell website	Direct mailings	Newspaper articles	Public meeting presentations and discussions	Neighborhood meetings	Other
	-	12.1	3.0	15.2	45.5	24.2

Figure 1.7: Non-participants perception on adequacy of information in the project

A total of 33 respondents which were involved in the purposive sample size did not participate in the project. Most of the questions in this section were open-ended questions that required respondents who did not participate in the project to help the researcher identify reasons for their lack of involvement. The findings are discussed in the section below

Questions 25 and 26 of the questionnaire specifically asked the respondents who did not participate in the project if adequate information was made available to them. Figure 1.7 above illustrates the perception of the respondents.

Figure 1.7 shows that 87.9% of the non-participants disagreed that the information on public meetings and the draft plan were readily available. Another 12.1% were neutral and there were no respondents that agreed that the information was available. This perception was also

consistent with the responses of those who participated in the project (table 1.3). Diduck and Sinclair (2002) suggested that information deficiencies could result from the medium used in disseminating the information, consistent with Figure 1.7.

A total of 45.5% of the respondents claimed that the information about the project would have best been accessible to them through the neighbourhood meetings. Another 24.2% claimed they would have preferred other means like announcement on radio, the use of town criers, and the delivery of the information in local languages to aid their understanding. This is consistent with the International Association for Public Participation [IAP2] (2007), guidelines for best practice in public participation that suggested that the public must be provided with all the necessary information to ensure their meaningful participation. Based on the responses of all the respondents and as already alluded, deficiencies in information remain one of the barriers to community involvement in the case study. This is also consistent with literature as limited information; inability to access information; over technicality of the information; and deficiencies in the information, broadly categorised as lack of information serves as a barrier to public participation in developmental projects (Diduck and Sinclair, 2002, Stinchcombe and Gibson, 2001, Botes and Van Rensburg, 2000).

1.7 Respondents' perception of community involvement in the case study

A section of the questionnaire contained open-ended questions (17-23 and 27-32) to enable community members that participated and those that did not, to describe their perception and to help identify the barriers that could hinder adequate community involvement in the project (Appendix 1). The findings in this section are presented through identifying common themes from the respondents. Although, there is no provision of numerical details of how many time the theme was raised, it does provide a comprehensive representation of the respondents' perceptions.

Respondents were asked to give a general overview about their perception of the participation process of the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project, as well as highlighting some of the positive and negative elements they noticed during their participation. A reoccurring theme from the responses indicated that most of the participating respondents appreciated the opportunity to be involved and stressed the fact that the project is a good sign for the communities. However, there

were some issues that they highlighted which were consistent with the barriers identified in the literature and also consistent with data provided above. This section provides a summary of respondents' perceptions on the barriers to community involvement in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project:

- **No adequate awareness to enhance the participation of lower class members of the community:** This was a common theme among those that participated and those that didn't participate in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project. This is consistent with the problem of late awareness that respondents' highlighted in table 1.1. It is considered as one of the barriers that hindered their participation and it is consistent with process deficiencies that are associated with similar projects. Respondents 15 and 23 described the problem as:

“There was no adequate awareness regarding the participation of lower level members of the community because most of the channels used to create awareness for the project were not adequate to reach the lower class people in the community”.

“I was not aware and didn't know about the project because I was too busy trying to earn a living”.

- **The host communities were not fully involved and their contributions are usually not given due consideration:** This problem is consistent with one of the barriers identified in the literature and discussed above (lack of impact in ultimate decision). The respondents emphasised in the open-ended questions that government and project implementers tried to boycott public involvement in the project because for fear of conflicts and the time required for the parties to come to a consensus. This is also consistent with the data presented above (figure 1.2) where 60% of the respondents disagreed that there was equal opportunity to participate in the project. Respondents 1 and 5 described the problem as:

“Most times the decisions about the project had been concluded even before community comments and as such our comments don't

really make any difference. The meetings were mostly to tell the community about the project and not our contribution to the decision making of the project”.

“Projects like this are usually concluded during government and project developers meetings and as such comments from concerned community members are not given due consideration”.

- **Poor information to the uneducated and poor communication mechanism between the project developer and communities:** This remains one of the problems that many of the respondents emphasised in the open-ended questions. This is also consistent with their responses in the data presented in table 1.2. The literature as discussed above also identified lack of information and information deficiencies as one of the major barriers of public participation in developmental projects. Respondents 7 and 12 are quoted as follows:

“The host communities were not given adequate information about the project. The methods used to distribute information by project developers and the government were not targeted to the poor and illiterate members of the communities”.

“Information about the project was too technical to be understood by a common man in the community and they were usually made available to the community leaders and the educated people that can read the draft. However, the majority of the community are the uneducated who cannot read or write”.

- **Poor incentives for the poor people in the communities:** As presented in the socioeconomic status of the respondents, the common profession in these communities are farming and fishing. Hence, it is important to provide incentive that will encourage them to sacrifice their jobs and participate in the project. Consistent with literature, lack of motivation or incentive is one of the barriers that could hinder public participation (Diduck and Sinclair, 2002). Respondent 20 described the problem as follow:

“Incentives were usually given to the community leaders to facilitate the process and encourage people to participate but they divert the funds into their private pockets”.

- **Roles and responsibilities:** Some of the participants associated some of the barriers to the major stakeholders in the project (community leaders, community members, project developers and the government). They emphasized that project developers should understand their role by ensuring that any financial incentives does not end in the hands of community leaders; ensure that women and youths are also involved in the project process; ensure that relevant information gets to all categories of people in the communities and not only the community leaders and educated ones. They highlighted that the government can control the barriers by ensuring that they facilitate and control the relationship between project implementers and host communities; they should also monitor the level of community involvement by the project implementers.

They further emphasized that most of the challenges associated with community involvement is with the community leader who fail in their responsibility to bring community members and project implementers together to implement the project; fail to ensure that financial incentives are evenly distributed to every member of the community; fail to ensure that adequate information gets to the members of the community in a way they will understand; and, fail to ensure that public meetings and workshops are well organised and the contributions of community members are included in the final decision. Some respondents also emphasised that the community members have a role to play by making themselves available in the community involvement process and to stop making excuses for non-participation.

The above section provided a comprehensive summary with direct quotes from the respondents on open-ended questions that concern their involvement in the project process. The common themes from the responses were consistent with the barriers to public participation identified in literature and as already alluded. All the stakeholders in the project are tasked with roles and responsibilities to ensure adequate community involvement in developmental projects.

1.8 The views for non-participation

As noted in the methodology section, in section five of the questionnaire, the entire questionnaire was categorised into key factors that could hinder public participation, including other factors highlighted by the respondent and they were asked using a scale from 1-5 to identify which they considered to be most important factor based on their responses to the other sections of the questionnaire. For each response option, the questionnaire data were classified into three groups: scale 4 and 5 were classified to be very important, scale 3 as neutral and scale 1 and 2 as unimportant.

Deepening the qualitative analysis, figure 1.8 presents the findings for each of the identified factors for non-participation. Chi square test was performed to assess the independence in the responses of important, unimportant and neutral. As a result, one would not expect equal proportion of responses for the three groups. Therefore, significant evidence from the chi square results suggested the independence of the responses between important, unimportant and neutral, and to confirm that the one with the highest proportion of response should be considered to be the most significant of the three responses.

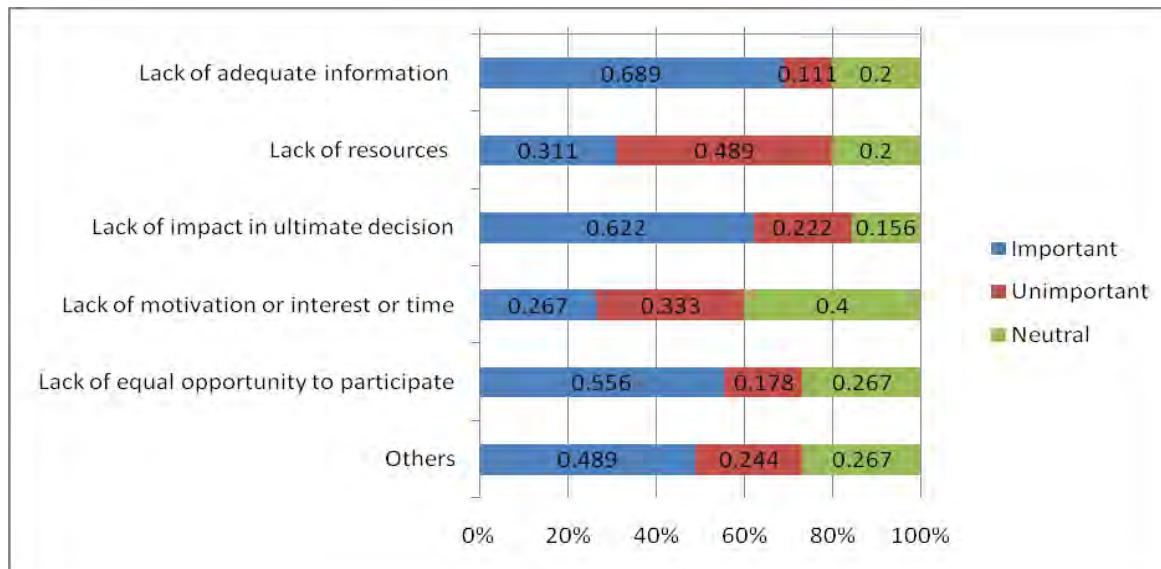


Figure 1.8: Respondents perspective on the importance of identified factors for non-participation in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project

Using the probability value (p-value) and 0.05 level of significance, it was concluded that there was sufficient evidence to suggest independence in the responses being important, unimportant or neutral for the response options of “lack of adequate information”, “lack of impact on the ultimate decision”, and “lack of equal opportunity to participate” (Appendix 2) and the independence in the responses confirmed that the highest proportion of response is considered the most significant (68.9%, 62.2% and 55.6% respectively) (figure 1.8). This is consistent with the earlier section that interrogated adequacy of information (figure 1.3) and lack of equal opportunity to participate (figure 1.6) and as highlighted in the open-ended questions. Therefore, “lack of information”, “lack of impact on the ultimate decision”, and “lack of equal opportunity to participate” were considered to be the most important reasons for non-participation from respondent’s perspective in the case study.

Furthermore, the chi square analysis for “lack of resources”, “other factors” and “lack of motivation or interest or time” showed that there was no sufficient evidence to suggest that there was independence in the responses being important, unimportant or neutral (Appendix 2) and therefore, the response with the highest proportion cannot be considered as the most significant (48.9%, 48.9% and 40% respectively) (figure 1.8). Although, these barriers were identified as some of the barriers in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project, they are, however, not considered as important barriers for non-participation from the respondent’s perspective.

In addition, chi square test was used to examine the independence between the demographic variables (gender, age, profession and educational qualification) and reasons for non-participation. The results showed that there is no relationship between the demographic variables and the response options, and the decision by the respondents to consider any of the response option as an important reason for non-participation was not based on gender, age, profession or qualification (Appendix 2). With a significance level (0.05), the chi square test showed a relationship between educational qualification and “lack of equal opportunity to participate”. In other words, there is a relationship between educational qualification and lack of equal opportunity as a reason for non-participation in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project and this was based on their educational qualification. This is consistent with Richardson and Razzaque, (2005), suggesting that members of the public cannot make reasonable contributions in the

decision making process because of inadequate technical support and the inability to access all necessary information, hence hindering their participation in developmental projects.

1.9 Summary and recommendation

This research presented empirical evidence to the barriers identified that could hinder adequate public participation from a community perspective in a developing country like Nigeria, using the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project as a case study. These barriers include: “lack of adequate information”; “lack of resources”; “lack of impact in the ultimate decision”; “lack of opportunity to participate”; and “lack of motivation or interest or time”. The research suggested that the barriers identified were consistent with some of the factors highlighted in the literature that could hinder community involvement in developmental project from a community perspective in a developing country like Nigeria. However, some of the problems like late awareness, high illiteracy level and high poverty level associated with communities in the Nigeria Niger Delta region were also highlighted to be barriers to community involvement in developmental projects.

The long-term sustainability of the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project is dependent on adequate community participation. There should be early involvement of community members in the decision making process of the project so they can voice their needs and concerns about the project and provide relevant information that may help improve the quality of the project (Creighton, 2005). This might increase the community’s trust and support for the project and they could serve as “watchdogs” for the project

There is also the need to provide adequate information to the communities on the necessity and purpose of the project, and any information on the negative and positive impacts of the project. Furthermore, it is important to identify information dissemination techniques that are best suitable for the community member (Diduck and Sinclair, 2002). Translation of meeting minutes and other materials to local languages, and the transmission of the same to the members of the local community might help in engendering better understanding.

Women and the youths should also be involved and given the opportunity to contribute to the decision making process because they are often the majority in these communities. As emphasised in the literature review, everyone in the community regardless of their social status

should participate in the decision making process (Mathabatha and Naidoo, 2004). This will help to broaden the perspective of the information needed to improve the quality of the decision. Despite the high level of illiteracy in these communities, project implementers can provide training sessions for the community members to educate them about the project. Meetings should also take place at times that is regarded as convenient, such as evenings and over the weekends, so that work and home chores do not prevent the community members from participating in the project.

Also, the input from the community members must have a significant influence in the final decision, and the process should enhance the participants' knowledge of the project. The communities need to be informed about the benefits of their active participation in the project. Furthermore, the involvement of the communities should go beyond the project approval stage and span through to the project implementation and monitoring stages of mitigatory measures. In addition, project implementers must ensure that they monitor every incentives to enable it achieve its purpose of facilitating the process and encouraging participation, instead of leaving them in the hands of community leaders.

The view on non-participation in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project revealed important factors that hindered community participation that should be given adequate attention. According to the study, "lack of adequate information", "lack of impact in ultimate decision", and "lack of equal opportunity to participate" were serious impediments to community involvement in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project from the respondent's perspective. Some of the recommendations provided above could help solve the problem and improve community involvement in future developmental projects.

The study also revealed barriers such as "lack of resources", "lack of motivation or interest or time", and other factors that some of the respondents identified in the questionnaires were not sufficient reasons from the respondent's perspective why they didn't participate in the case study. However, it is important not to neglect these barriers because they might be important in a holistic view point of community involvement in developmental projects.

1.10 Limitations

The limitation to this research was that the community leaders refused to participate in the study because they claimed that the issues were very sensitive. Clear insight to most of the issues could have been raised that would improve the research if community leaders' participated in the study. The question of research fatigue also arises where the community members felt that a number of researches have already been conducted without any result that are directly beneficial to them. As a result, the communities were unwilling to participate resulting in the sample size.

1.11 Further research

Further research should be carried out to understand the barriers/challenges project developers and the government face to ensure adequate community involvement in developmental project in Nigeria.

1.12 Conclusion

Despite the challenges and limitations faced in conducting this study, effort was made to identify and provide support in advancing the knowledge of factors that could hinder public participation in developmental projects. Public participation will not be able to achieve its aim of creating a medium that encourages organisations to involve people who want to participate in making decisions that affect them except such barriers are identified and addressed. Furthermore, other researches are required relating to public involvement in developmental projects from the perspective of the state in Nigeria. This project already identified other factors that could hinder public participation from respondents' perspective.

1.13 References

- Abelson, J., Forest, P. G., Eyles, J., Smith, P., Martin, E., and Gauvin, F. P, 2003. *Deliberations about deliberative methods: issues in the design and evaluation of public participation processes*. Social Science & Medicine, Vol. 57 (2003): 239-25
- Adomokai, R., and Sheate, W. R, 2004. *Community participation and environmental decision-making in the Niger Delta*. Environmental Impact Assessment Review, Vol. 24 (2004): 495-518.
- Aluko, M. A. O. 2004. *Sustainable development, environmental degradation, the entrenchment of poverty in the Niger Delta of Nigeria*. Journal of human ecology, Vol. 15, No. 1: 63-68.
- Ariweriokuma, S. 2010. *The political economy of oil and gas in Africa: The case of Nigeria*. Published by Routledge, New York, USA.
- Botes, L., and Van Rensburg, D., 2000. *Community participation in development: Nine plagues and twelve commandments*. Community Development Journal, Vol. 35, No 1: 41-58
- Diduck, A., and Sinclair, A. J. 2002. *Public Involvement in Environmental Assessment: A case of the nonparticipants*. Environmental Management, Vol. 29, No 4: 578-588
- Halvorsen, K. E. 2001. *Assessing Public Participation Techniques for Comfort, Convenience, Satisfaction, and Deliberation*. Environmental management, Vol. 28, No 2: 179-186
- Hartly, N., and Wood, C. 2005. *Public participation in environmental impact assessment- implementing the Aarhus convention*. Environmental Impact Assessment Review, Vol. 25: 319-340
- IAP2, 2007. *Core values for the practice of public participation 2007*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.iap2.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=4>. [Accessed 12 April 2011]
- Idemudia, 2007. *Corporate Partnerships and Community Development in the Nigerian Oil Industry: Strengths and Limitations*. United Nations Research Institute for Social Development - 2007
- Idemudia, U. 2009. *Oil Extraction and Poverty Reduction in the Niger Delta: A Critical Examination of Partnership Initiatives*. Journal of Business Ethics Vol. 90:91-116

Lasker, R. D., and Weiss, E. S. 2003. ***Broadening Participation in Community Problem Solving: a Multidisciplinary Model to Support Collaborative Practice and Research.*** Journal of urban health, Vol. 80, No 1.

Mathabatha, S., and Naidoo, D. 2004. ***A review of public participation in the rural water and sanitation setting.*** Water Research Commission (WRC). Report No 1381/1/04.

Obi, C., and Rustad, S. 2011. ***Oil and insurgency in the Niger Delta: Managing the complex politics of petro-violence.*** Published by Zed books, New York. USA.

Okoh, R. N. 2005. ***Conflict Management in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria.*** African journal on conflict resolution, Vol 5. No 1: 91.

Oyefusi, A. 2007. ***Oil-dependence and civil conflicts in Nigeria.*** Centre for the study of African Economies. Paper 268

Reed, M. S. 2008. ***Stakeholder Participation for Environmental Management: A literature Review,*** Biological Conservation, Vol. 141 (2008): 2417-2431

Richardson, B. J., and Razzaque, J. 2005. ***Public Participation in Environmental Decision-making.*** Journal for environmental law. 2005: 165

Shell Nigeria, 2011. ***Shell interest in Nigeria.*** [Online]. Available: http://www-static.shell.com/static/nga/downloads/pdfs/briefing_notes/shell_interests.pdf. [Accessed 20 October 2011]

Shell Nigeria, 2011. ***The Gbaran-Ubie integrated oil and gas project.*** [Online]. Available: http://www-static.shell.com/static/nga/downloads/pdfs/briefing_notes/gbaran.pdf. [Accessed 20 October 2011]

Smith, B. L., 2003. ***Public policy and public participation: Engaging citizens and communities in the development of public policy.*** BLSmithGroupwork Inc. Halifax NS, Canada.

Stinchcombe, K., and Gibson, R. B. 2001. ***Strategic Environmental Assessment as a means of pursuing sustainability: Ten advantages and ten challenges.*** Journal of Environmental Assessment Policy and Management, Vol 3, No 3: 343-372.

United Nation Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), 2010. ***Public participation in forestry in Europe and North America.*** [Online]. Available:

<http://www.unece.org/timber/docs/publications-other/report-participation.pdf>. [Accessed 26 April 2010]

Utts.J. M, and Heckard. R. F., 2007. *Mind on Statistics (3ed)*. Brooks/Cole, Cengage learning. Belmont, USA.

SECTION TWO:

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Over the years, the different environmental issues that have been created by human activities have been the concern of international organizations, governments, environmentalists, individuals and the public in general (Diduck and Sinclair, 2002). This is one of the main reasons why there are a number of researches regarding sustainable ways of achieving development. Sustainable development could simply be described as the ability to include economic, social and environmental factors in the decision making process of developmental projects (Richardson and Razzaque, 2005). One of the fundamental tools for environmental management that has been recognised by both the public and private sector around the world is public participation (Diduck and Sinclair, 2002).

According to Abelson, et al (2003), public participation creates a two-way communication medium that encourages the interactions between the parties involved in the decision making process. Most developmental projects are characterised by factors that causes environmental problems to the public and as such, there need to be a system that involves the public in the decision making process to ensure transparency and accountability (Reed, 2008). It is therefore important that the public is involved actively from the implementation to the evaluation phase of a project to improve the quality of the decision (Richardson and Razzaque, 2005).

Public participation is a term in literature that could be used in place of public involvement, participatory process and community involvement (Mathabatha and Naidoo, 2004). Some of its main objectives identified in literature are to strengthen interpersonal relations between project implementers and communities, improve decision making, ensure representation of diversified social groups to stabilise communication between stakeholders, and to encourage local ownership, commitment and accountability (Mathabatha and Naidoo, 2004).

Despite the good intentions of public participation in literature, there are formidable barriers that could hinder its adequate implementation from a community perspective (Diduck and Sinclair,

2002). Community involvement from some developing countries' perspective is not always considered as a sincere attempt to allow communities make choices of the developmental projects they want, but to convince them to accept already planned projects (Botes and Van Rensburg, 2000). Therefore, the aim of this literature review section is to examine the concept of public participation as it is described in the literature; to describe the rationale for public participation; identify the different types of public participation and some international guidelines; to identify the barriers to public participation in the literature; to elaborate how it is applicable in the context of a developing country like Nigeria, with particular emphasis on the oil rich Niger Delta region, and to identify ways to improve community involvement in the decision making process of a project like the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project.

2.2 Background

2.2.1 The Nigerian oil industry

Nigeria occupies a land area of about 923,800 km² and is located between 14° North latitude and 4°-13° East longitude (Ariweriokuma, 2010). It has a population of over 145 million people, 36 states (see Fig 1) and approximately 300 ethnic groups around the country (Oyefusi, 2007). Oil production started as far back as the 1950s and it is currently estimated that Nigeria has crude oil reserve of about 36 billion barrels of oil and has an annual excess of \$8.0 billion in the upstream sector expenditure (Ariweriokuma, 2010). According to Ariweriokuma (2010), the total average daily production of 5,100 b/d in 1958 increased to 2.4 mmbd in 2006 and production further increased to 2.5 mmbd in 2008 and 4.5 mmbd in 2010. Nigeria is considered as one of the major players in the world energy market. Oyefusi (2007: 5) described Nigeria as “the largest oil-producer in Sub-Saharan Africa and it is the fifth largest exporting country in the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)”. It is also considered as the seventh largest oil producer in the world and it is further becoming a significant world supplier of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) (Ikelegbe, 2005).



Figure 2.1: Map of Nigeria (Source: Adomokai and Sheate, 2004)

Shell, Mobil, Chevron, Agip, Elf and Texaco are the six foreign companies that presently dominate the Nigerian oil industry (Oyefusi, 2007). The Nigerian government through the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) operates contractual agreements with the oil companies and it traditionally has majority shareholding interest in them (Oyefusi 2007). The Nigerian government depends largely on oil and gas for the nation's revenues, economy and national survival. According to Ariweriokuma (2010: 168), "oil and gas account for 40% of the

Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 95% of the country's total export revenue and 80% of government revenue".

Despite the enormous revenue generated from oil and gas in Nigeria, the country is marred in poverty. According to Oyefusi (2007), the level of poverty in Nigeria has been on an increasing rate over the years and this is caused by the deteriorating income distribution between wealthy few and the majority living below the United Nation's US\$1 per day. Furthermore, natural resource abundance in the country has been associated with slow growth, greater inequality, corruption of political institutions, and most fundamentally, an increased risk of civil conflicts (Oyefusi, 2007).

2.2.2 The Niger Delta region

According to Oyefusi (2007), the Niger Delta region is considered to be one of the regions in Nigeria where oil and gas can easily formulate. Oyefusi, (2007: 6) also states that "the region has a wetland of 70,000 sq km spread over a number of ecological zones along the Gulf of Guinea and it is considered as the third largest wetland in the world" (See fig 2). The Niger Delta alone generates 90 percent of the country's oil income and also has the country's gas reserve that is considered to be the next major source of revenue to the country (Oyefusi, 2007).

The region also contains a very high level of biodiversity with different species of plants and animals, including many exotic and unique flowers and birds, and has a serious scarcity of arable land and freshwater (Obi and Rustad, 2011). Oil activities have over the years created a lot of environmental problems to this delicate environment in the Niger Delta (Obi and Rustad, 2011). Aluko (2004) emphasized that oil exploration in the Niger delta region brought incessant oil spills and pollution which has affected the traditional occupation in the region, with the main ones being farming and fishing. Hence, most people have been deprived of their sources of livelihood and this has led to other socio-economic problems like unemployment and poverty (Oyefusi, 2007). The initial concerns of the Niger Delta communities were basically issues relating to the socio-economic and environmental problems (Oyefusi, 2007).

However, when the environmental problems persisted and the sources of livelihood of the people were reduced or completely destroyed, they started protesting peacefully but it later became

aggressive and violent (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004). One of the ways in which companies and the government tried to solve the problem was to develop projects that served as community assistance (e.g. water project or community clinic). However, this was seen more as a public service and had nothing to do with host communities contributing and participating actively to the real environmental decisions (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004).

Therefore, to find a solution to the agitation in the Niger Delta region as it relates to oil production and related development, there must be strategies that goes beyond providing basic infrastructures to engaging communities and making them contribute and participate actively to environmental decisions that affects them (Oyefusi, 2008). Hence, it is important to have a clear understanding from the perceptive of the community members in order to identify ways that will engage them actively in the projects process and to understand the barriers that could hinder their participation.

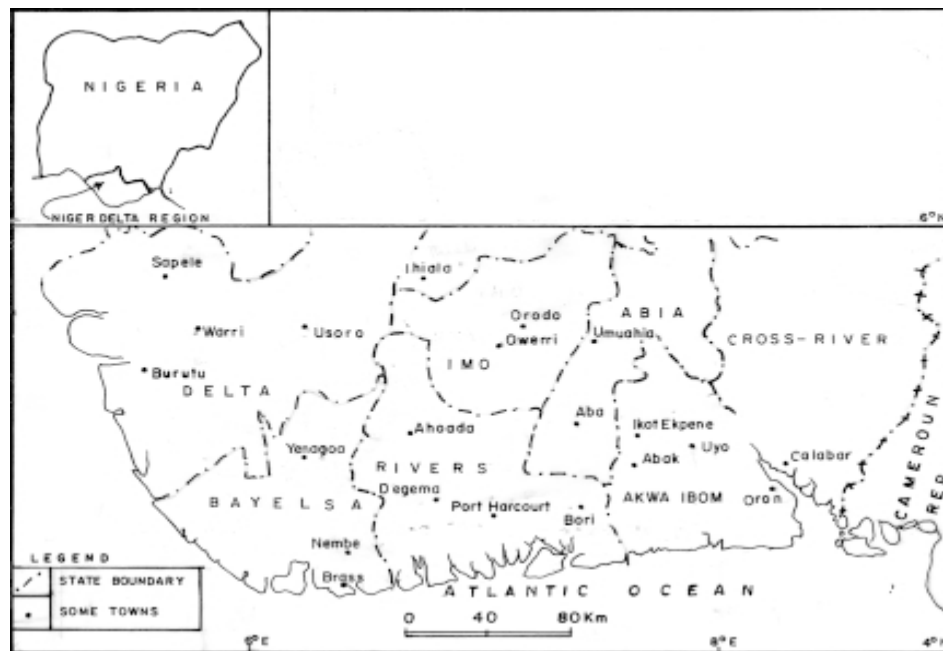


Figure 2.2: Map of Niger Delta Region, Nigeria (Source: Ibeanu, 2000)

2.2.3 Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project

Shell is the largest producer of oil in Nigeria, controlling about fifty percent of total production (Obi and Rustad, 2011). According to Shell Nigeria (2011: 2), it is reported that “it has 9,000 kilometres of flowlines and pipelines, 86 oil fields, 1,000 producing wells, 68 flow stations, 10 gas plants and two major export terminals at bonny and forcados, spread across an area of 30,000 square kilometres in the Niger Delta region, from which nearly one billion barrels of oil were produced daily”. Hence, Shell Nigeria is considered close to the ruling governments in Nigeria and many communities recognise the close relationship between Shell and the Nigerian state (Ibeanu, 2000).



Figure 2.3: Aerial view of Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project (Source: Shell Nigeria, 2011)

The Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project is a Shell oil and gas developmental project. According to Shell Nigeria (2011: 1), “it began work on the project in 2005 and the production facility attained the gas design capacity of one billion standard cubic of gas per day (bscf/day) on February 5, 2011 and it is expected that when all the wells are drilled and other factors in place, production will peak at about 70,000 barrels of oil a day”.

Shell Nigeria (2011: 1) also stated that “the project has taken five years to build and it involved drilling more than 30 new wells and building a central processing facility to treat both oil and gas, which is spread over 650 square kilometres area of Bayelsa and Rivers states” (Fig 2). Shell Nigeria has also identified to have engaged the local communities in providing jobs and other benefits the project brings to the local communities (Shell Nigeria, 2011). However, it is not clear if there are reports identifying the perception of the local communities in their involvement in the project and what barriers could have affected their involvement and ways they think can improve their involvement in future projects. Reports like this are useful in determining how existing relationships between the companies and the local communities should be maintained and how new ones should be formed. These gaps guides this research paper through exploring the concept of public participation, and identifying the barriers to community involvement in the context of a developing country like Nigeria and specifically on the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project.

2.3 Defining public participation

Since the inception of the concept of public participation, there has been different views and perspective that has resulted in no single universal definition (Mathabatha and Naidoo, 2004). Some existing definition are worth exploring, most of which define them as: (a) a process, (b) consulting with, and public involvement in decision making, and (c) from a rights perspective.

As a process, Creighton (2005: 7) described “public participation as a process by which public concerns, needs, and values are incorporated into government and corporate decision making”. In other words, it is important that the decision making process for developmental projects should include the opinions of the public in order for project implementers to have a broader perspective of the process. Creighton (2005) further identified elements that are important to the definition of public participation. These elements include:

- *Application of administrative decisions prepared by organisations, and not necessarily by elected officials.*

- *Creation of an interactive platform between the decision maker and the members of the public that are interested in participating and not only making information available to the public.*
- *Implementation of an organised procedure for public involvement; involving the public does not by chance, it requires adequate planning.*
- *Insisting that the contributions made by participants are included in the final decision making.*

Creighton's examination of public participation as a process is not too far from Reed's (2008: 2) who suggested it is "a process where individuals, groups and organisations choose to take an active role in making decisions that affects them". Because of the dynamic nature and technicalities involved in environmental decisions, it is usually prone to challenges and as such the harmonisation of these factors could reduce the challenges and foster better decision making (Reed, 2008).

Public participation can also be seen as a proactive consultation with those to whom the policies that emerge will involve. According to Rowe and Frewer (2001: 2), "public participation may be defined at a general level as the practice of consulting and involving members of the public in the agenda-setting, decision making, and policy-forming activities of organisations or institutions responsible for policy development". In other words, for public participation to be effective, local communities must be given direct and ultimate control in order for them to decide their own affairs. Rowe and Frewer (2001) further identified three ways in which public input can be introduced into decision making:

- *Firstly, the public can be involved by inactively receiving information from decision maker or project implementers.*
- *Secondly, public input maybe solicited through questionnaires and focus groups.*
- *Lastly, through a public representation in an advisory committee.*

Yet, a third way of examining public participation involves a right based approach as suggested by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) (2007) that members of the public have a right to participate in any decision making process that will affect them. IAP2 (2007), also identified that involving the members of the public increases the sustainability of the decision because it takes into consideration the opinions and concerns of parties involved. Therefore, in any developmental projects, it is important that project implementers have an in-depth understanding of public participation and how their involvement can foster better decision making.

Scott (1999: 1) agrees with IAP2 by describing participatory process “as an on-going process of decision-making by which the views of all stakeholders who have an interest in, or are affected by, an issue or project, are incorporated into decisions regarding the issue at hand”. This means that any developmental project will be an inflexible plan if there is no adequate public participation and to ensure that developmental projects achieves their goals, people have to participate in the decision and co-operate activities that affects their well-being.

From the above definitions, the issues of rights and awareness to the concept of public participation could be seen as a useful instrument/indicator for good governance, accountability, transparency, empowerment and environmental management (Richardson and Razzaque, 2005). Hence, it is important to understand the concept of public participation processes during developmental projects and ensure that the public are well involved and frequent review of the process is done to identify ways to improve the public involvement in developmental projects.

2.4 Rationale of public participation

The direct effects and damages some human activities have caused the immediate environment has contributed to the rationale why the public should be involved in environmental decision making process. Lasker and Weiss (2003: 1) emphasized that “people living in democratic societies have a right to a direct and meaningful voice about issues and services that affect them”. Richardson and Razzaque (2005) assert that public involvement is a fundamental factor in achieving sustainable development because sustainability simply encourages the integration of economic, social and environmental factors into the decision making process. Further, the importance and values the public assigns to their environment ensures that they provide decision

makers with relevant information (Creighton, 2005). These and several more reasons such as the following provide rationale for the need for public participation:

- **Improve quality of decisions:** The communities usually have vital information about existing conditions in their environment and consulting them usually helps to improve the quality of the decisions in developmental project (Creighton, 2005). Hence, the communities can reveal new alternatives and approaches beyond the ones that have been used in the past.
- **Resolve conflicts:** One of the reasons that community involvement has become more central to environmental decision making is the expectation that it can temper confrontational politics that typify environmental decision making and help to resolve long-standing problem of conflicts and mistrust, and build capacity for solving future problems (Beierle and Cayford, 1998)
- **Suitability:** Public participation can also ensure that members of the public finds the decision making process suitable and they can develop a new consciousness of their immediate environment (Bowler and Shepherd, 1997). In other words, the decision making process must be transparent enough to ensure public acceptance.
- **Improved planning:** Community involvement is usually regarded as an essential resource of knowledge and it generally helps to develop a more reasonable and objective planning for developmental projects, and to improve the transparency in the process to support a responsive decision to the community (Bowler and Shepherd, 1997)
- **Democracy:** Democratic ethic and ideals encourages that members of the public are significantly represented and their interest are protected in every government decision making process (Bowler and Shepherd, 1997). This means that every interested member of the public that is directly or indirectly affected by government decisions should be involved in the decision process.

The above identified rationale of public participation clearly describes how public participation is vital and could contribute to improving the decision making process of developmental projects, improving ways of achieving sustainability, and also specifying how it could be an

important tool in resolving crisis. Hence, identifying the barriers that could hinder adequate public participation will encourage decisions that are responsive to local communities.

2.5 Types and techniques of public participation

There are various techniques of participation identified in the literature. Although, there is also a growing consensus that requires the need to identify and apply new techniques that are secure, suitable, and agreeable to the participants, because decisions should be seen to be fair, legitimate, and acceptable by all, thus helping to identify important values and interest of communities and individuals (Halvorsen, 2001). Some identified techniques include:

- **Interviews:** This is one of the important techniques of engaging communities in developmental projects. It ensures individual discussion with the community or representatives of interest groups which will enable project implementers or service providers to acquire a wider range of information, and thus identifying problems and challenges that were not initially identified (Smith, 2003).
- **Workshops:** Workshops are structured meetings aimed at reviewing information, defining issues, solve problems or plan review. Most workshops use facilitation and are required to provide adequate information that will equip communities regarding a project and provide solutions to any problem that may arise in developing an action plan (Smith, 2003). However, an important point to note is that the success of workshops in engaging communities depends on its design and management.
- **Open houses:** An open house ensures that information about a project or proposal are communicated to the public through displays, printed materials, and the project implementers or service providers avail themselves to answer questions, discuss issues, and provide clarification about a project (Mathabatha and Naidoo, 2004).
- **Surveys:** A survey is a system used to source for ideas and collect information to express, evaluate, or describe knowledge of individuals or groups. They portray community perceptive and preferences, and provide information to the community and

ensure that all necessary attention is given to the issues that are most important to the community (Mathabatha and Naidoo, 2004).

- **Public hearing:** This is the most common form of public participation technique. A public hearing is a formal meeting between communities and project implementers or service providers in order to discuss a particular project and the communities give their thoughts concerning the decision (Mathabatha and Naidoo, 2004). This promotes and facilitates interactions between the project implementers and the communities so that the information, suggestion or concerns expressed by the communities are given due consideration in the final decision.

Although, it's difficult to state which of the above techniques are better for community involvement; because each has its own peculiar characteristics, strengths and weaknesses. However, the most suitable option(s) can only be identified once the objectives of an initiative and the purpose of community involvement have been achieved. Chess (1999), argues that there is no generally acceptable classification that can predict which technique will work given any situation but the outcome of the results depends on how the project implementers use the technique. As a result, this research attempted to identify other techniques/methods that could best engage the communities in a developing country situation like Nigeria with the goal of improving their involvement in developmental projects.

2.6 Who should participate?

This is a question that is frequently asked in the literature with regards to the kinds of people that should participate in developmental projects (Mathabatha and Naidoo, 2004). It is essential that every member of the community regardless of their social status should be granted an opportunity to be involved in the decision making process, e.g. community leaders, women's leagues, youth, civil society organisation, etc. Reed (2008) identified that community involvement can help improve the decision making process because of a more inclusive information inputs that will be presented. Hence, it is important for project implementers to develop a reaching out strategy that will motivate and encourage even the poorest in the

community to participate and also ensure that their views are given due considerations in order to avoid domination by the elites.

2.7 Guidelines for best practice for public participation

There is a growing desire by organisations and governments around the world for greater public involvement in environmental management (Rowe and Frewer, 2001). The inability to prove the value of the methods of public participation raises confusion as to the appropriate benchmark for evaluation (Rowe and Frewer, 2001). Palerm (2000: 3) further argues that “evaluation criteria for public participation in environmental management, with a strong theoretical backing, the functionality of empirical best practice and the consideration of the country-specific context, have remained elusive”. However, a number of there are some of the international prescriptions and common guidelines for public participation are evident in the literature. This section identifies the guidelines, best practice principles, characteristics and success factors that have characterised public participation and decision making.

IAP2 (2007: 1) states the guidelines for best practice of public participation as follow:

- *In order for public participation to be adequate, the rights to involve those affected by the decision must be protected.*
- *Best practice of public participation stipulates that the contributions made by members of the public will be given due consideration in the final decision.*
- *Sustainable decision can be promoted by the ability of the decision makers to identify and understand the desires and interests of all participants in the decision making process.*
- *Public participation must seek out and facilitate the participation of the members of the public that are directly or indirectly affected by a decision.*
- *Best practice of public participation requires that members of the public are involved in determining and designing the ways they should be involved in the process.*
- *There is also the need to ensure that all information the members of the public requires to make reasonable contributions in the decision making process are provided.*
- *Members of the public needs to be adequately informed on how their contributions affected the decision.*

The aim of such guidelines is to increase the awareness of the public on environmental issues, to increase their level of involvement, improve the quality of the decision and to make the final decision accepted by everyone (IAP2, 2007).

Another set of guidelines is described by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) (2010: 1), as follows:

- *The need to extensively search for and to contact existing interests, including non-organized interests before commencing the process of public participation.*
- *The importance to defining clear rules with participants from the outset- clarifying how and when they can participate, on what kind of subject matter, and how their inputs will be used in the process.*
- *The need for parties to agree on a work plan, defining the goals and commitments within a time frame, as well as clarity on tasks and responsibilities.*
- *The transparency of the process and the competencies of the participants determined by the way information is adequately managed within and outside the process.*
- *The motivation and trust level of participants maintained or increased by the amount of feedback provided by visible results.*
- *The importance of noting that public participation can improve communication between hierarchical levels and can ensure intra-organizational functioning.*
- *The useful role of implementing mediation techniques or an outside facilitator when existing or potential conflicts are evident requiring of open and fair discussions.*
- *The importance and essential nature of transparency in the evaluation process especially when the participatory process does not only define its goals but clearly states the criteria of success and indicators for monitoring progress.*

Public participation should be an integral part of the decision making process, because they also provide the benchmark needed to check the adequacy of the process. Likewise, it is important to note that accountability to the public is a key element of successful and adequate public participation and a major tool for avoiding conflicts (UNECE, 2010). Hence, these benchmarks identify ways to improve participation from a community perspective; moreover because inhabitants of communities are often the first victims of any environmental catastrophe, some of

which do not adequately empower them to respond or adapt to the crisis – this often as a result of bad decision making to which they are not involved.

Certain characteristics define best practice for public participation. Creighton (2005: 3) identified a few:

- *A mandate for the decision maker should emerge: public participation is one way to ensure that decision makers get the consent of the public to proceed.*
- *It should be one of the essential parts of a larger decision making process: The public participation process should not be isolated but adequately incorporated into the decision making process.*
- *Decisions that involve the public should involve them at every step: Public participation cannot exclude those interested public that would like to be involved in every step of the decision making process.*
- *Resulting program designs should target those involved: Programs are developed to ensure the participation of all the members of the public who are perceived to be affected by the decision.*
- *Multiple techniques should be used to attract those involved: one approach maybe successful over another for attracting the participation of different audiences, several approaches aimed at different audiences may be required.*

Beierle and Konisky (2000: 3) further explain that the success of public participation in the decision making process of developmental projects could be measured against three social goals:

- *That they incorporate the widely differing interest and principles of different members of the public in the decision making process.*
- *That they build a relationship with the public, communicating effectively and helping the public understand the goals and perspectives of others so that potential conflicts are resolved among competing interest.*

- *That they restore or rebuild some level of trust in public agencies through greater public control of decision making in developmental projects.*

The guidelines, best practice principles, characteristics and success factors described above identify the need for project implementers to build a cordial relationship with local communities through understanding their values and ensuring that every interested person in the community is given an opportunity to adequately contribute to the final decision. As a result, this research attempted to understand the community values from their perspectives in order to identify ways to improve their participation.

2.8 Barriers to adequate public participation

Despite the fact that public participation is considered an important requirement for developmental projects, the process of involving the public is characterised by many potential problems and barriers, which hinder adequate participation of the public. Stinchcombe and Gibson (2001: 1) identified many barriers including:

- *Inadequate information and inevitable fears of engaging the public;*
- *Inability to understand the role of the public and when they should be involved in the process;*
- *Improper methods used in involving the public;*
- *The resistance by government and project proponents to involve the public;*
- *The resistance to include the contributions of the public in the final decision;*

Public participation has the potential to help in developing a mutual relationship between the members of the public and project implementers, but poor application could lead to difficulties such as legal litigation, protest, criticism and most commonly delay in the project. According to Diduck and Sinclair (2002) the potential barriers to public participation include:

- *Information deficiencies, which comprises of the inability to access information, the over technicality of the information and the deficiencies in the information making it difficult to understand the rationale and potential impact of the project.*

- *Lack of resources, knowledge, and skills required by community members to engage, challenge, and confront the project implementers in cases where such actions are needed.*
- *Opportunity to participate is often restricted and constrained by process deficiencies that restrain the extensive involvement of the public in environmental matters.*
- *The absence of the public's contribution in the final decision taken by project implementers often signals that most of the decisions were already concluded before the communities are invited to participate. It further discourages their participation.*
- *Lack of understanding, motivation, interest and time are factors that stand as barriers to people becoming involved in some of these projects.*

Botes and Van Rensburg (2000: 2) further identified various factors that could hinder or restrain the public from participating, suggesting factors ranging from “institutional to socio-cultural, to technical, to logistical, and a spread over a seemingly endless spectrum”. Some of the factors include:

- *The paternalistic role of project implementers or service providers which tend to impede various ways of involving the public in developmental projects.*
- *The authoritarian nature of the state, which is not aimed at improving the conditions for community participation or modifying the form of decision making but instead, maintain existing power it has over the society and suppressing the poor.*
- *The extent to which only the success of developmental project is reported and documented, with little or no emphasis on its failures.*
- *The selective participation that concentrates only on the elites and the few educated groups in the decision process without serious and on-going attempt to identify the less privileged people in the society.*
- *The lack of community interest in becoming involved in developmental projects.*

According to Richardson and Razzaque (2005), people usually get disillusioned with the decision making process as a whole, if their inputs are not integrated into the final decision, ultimately reducing the quality of the environmental decision. They further identified some of the potential barriers to public participation as follow:

- *The excessively technical and bureaucratic procedures for involving the public in environmental decision making are becoming a major hurdle for fruitful consultation.*
- *The inadequate technical support and the inability of accessing clear information could reduce the capacity of members of the public to make reasonable contributions in the decision making process.*
- *The financial cost to participants for accessing information, preparing submission, attending hearings and litigating, and the cost to project implementers forming a major hindering factor to public participation.*

Okoh (2005) further acknowledges that public participation faces a number of inherent barriers, which could be due to some of the technicalities that come with the participatory process. Okoh (2005: 1) identified some the barriers as follow:

- *The delay in the involvement of the public that usually lead to time pressure.*
- *The fear of conflict which makes project implementers to avoid public participation*
- *Temptation of reverting to the old ways of doing things.*
- *The tendency for project implementers to want to use constricted or biased measures of success and achievements.*

These potential barriers could be applicable to most collaborative projects in any country. One of the goals of this research is to provide empirical evidence to some of the aforementioned potential barriers to public participation, and to do this - from the perspective of communities in close proximity to the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project, especially those faced with environmental degradation, corruption, poverty, and unemployment challenges. The next section provides an overview of this context in Nigeria.

2.9 Public participation experience in Nigeria

Over the years, the process of community involvement in environmental management has not been given due consideration as an important function especially in the oil producing region of Nigeria. In the late 1980's, members of communities were informed about projects only when the implementing company has mobilized its machineries to the site (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004). According to Adomokai and Sheate (2004) some particular groups in the communities were usually visited by some management staffs of the oil companies to notify them of their intended projects and pay some respect. Respect in this regard includes an exchange of gifts usually from the implementing company to the communities, sometimes undermining the integrity of the communities and their willingness to engage (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004).

Prior to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, companies were not under any legal requirement to perform an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) prior to any developmental project. However, in 1992, the EIA Decree No. 86 was passed into the Nigerian law that clearly states and emphasized that the views and opinions of members of affected communities must be sought before the commencement of any developmental project (Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 1992).

2.9.1 Nigeria EIA Decree No. 86 of 1992

The EIA Decree of 1992:

“Is the only regulatory instrument available in Nigeria that consider public participation in environmental decision making and its major objectives is to integrate environmental concerns into major development activities, implement appropriate policies at all levels and encourage the development of procedures for exchanging information, notifying and consultation between groups and individuals whose activities may have significant environmental impacts”

Adomokai and Sheate (2004: 1).

This is in accordance with Sections 7, 22 (3), and 26a (ii) which states that:

“before the agency gives a decision on any activity to which an environmental assessment has been produced, the agency shall give an opportunity to government agencies, members of the public, experts in any relevant discipline and interested groups to make comment on

environmental impact assessment of the activity” (Section 7; Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 1992).

“before taking a course of action in relation to a project pursuant to subsection (1) of this section, the Agency shall give the public an opportunity to examine and comment on the screening report and any record that has been filed in the public registry established in respect of the project pursuant to section 51 of this Decree and shall take into consideration any comments that are filed” (Section 22 (3); Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 1992).

“after taking into consideration the mandatory study report and any comments filed pursuant to section 19(2), the Council shall refer the project to mediation or a review panel in accordance with section 25 of this Decree where, in the opinion of the Council, public concerns respecting the environmental effects of the project warrant it” (Section 26a (ii); Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 1992).

Section 25 of the Decree also implies that “comments and issues identified by the public should guide the Agency in deciding whether to approve a project or not” (Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 1992).

However, despite the well-defined legislation governing developmental projects in Nigeria, the public involvement aspect of the EIA is still being perceived by project proponents as a means of empowering communities to make demands from project implementers. This approach is considered a problem for project implementers because it increases cost and causes delay in commencement of a project (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004). As a result, contributions made by communities are undermined as they are not usually considered and included in the final decision. Government and oil companies often feel superior to the indigenous communities (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004). Project proponents usually claim that the involvement of members of local communities in the decision making process is unimportant because they lack the technical know-how to make any meaningful contribution and that informing them of the benefits is sufficient (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004). This position is however not in the best

interest of the communities as they hold historic knowledge and experience of their land and environment from which they could inform the policies that emanate from the design and delivery of these projects.

Adomokai and Sheate (2004) often, when communities do not see their inputs reflected in the policies and decisions they resort to peaceful protests which eventually become violent; more so, when environmental pollution increases, sources of livelihood reduces, and they perceive that less project awareness and low level involvement in these projects. (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004), These are sufficient barriers to successful project implementation – the mere fact that existing legislation are not adhered to by the oil companies and government; as a result the success of future projects are also in jeopardy. More regulatory policing may be required to drive better cooperation between implementing companies and communities.

2.9.2 Community involvement and environmental decision-making in the Niger Delta region

Several challenges characterise project implementation in the Niger Delta region, as mentioned in the previous two sections. The availability of funds to support projects, the lack of methods that are inclusive, and a lack of incentives to draw community support are some of the challenges that are specific to the region. There are “so many practical problems ranging from financial support, methods used and the willingness for identified communities to participate in environmental decision making in the Niger delta region” (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004: 3). In addition, continuous neglect by project implementers and the government, and the high levels of poverty imposed on communities by the effects of environmental problems on their sources of livelihood continue to plague development (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004).

Project implementers usually attribute the challenges to project implementation with the role that communities play if they were invited as collaborators (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004). As a result, they try to avoid their involvement because of the perception that community members will make demands that may lead to project delays and increase in project cost, thus affecting the entire project cycle (Fyrnas, 2001).

This perception has turned around full circle to haunt implementing companies and the government as what was previously a local issue has gained international recognition and visibility. Even though, the conflicts in the Niger delta region between oil companies, government and local communities have lasted for several years, further escalation in the 1990's has drawn international attention to it and a concern for so many people around the world (Fyrnas, 2001). Project implementers have little choice but to recognise the need for community involvement under the watchful eyes of international community (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004).

The environmental damage caused by the extraction of oil and the neglect in the local communities remain the main reason behind the dispute in the region (Ibeanu, 2000); although, Nwapi (2010) argued that the principal cause of the conflict is directly associated with the level of bad governance, corruption and discriminatory policies that exclude the affected local communities from being involved in the decision making process that affects their lives. The region contributes the most to the nation's foreign revenue but, unfortunately, it comprises of the poorest people in the nation, the region is one of the most undeveloped parts of the country (Ikelegbe, 2001).

Oil companies have tried to respond to this challenge "by adopting partnership strategies as a means of contributing to community development, building a mutually beneficial relationship with local communities and reinventing themselves as a force for good in their host communities" (Idemudia, 2009: 2). However, this also turned out to be a top-to-bottom approach and as such there was no active involvement of community members in the environmental decision that resulted from these engagements or in the process (Frazer, et al. 2006).

Okafor (1982) argued that clear distinction should be made at two levels: informing and involvement; for better collaboration between communities and project implementers. One should not replace the other; neither should one be used in isolation of the other. Communities should be informed of the project, the decision that may be required of them; and they should be involved and requested to contribute to the background information, and to be consulted at every stage of the project.

Okoh (2005: 1) highlighted some of the ways communities have been using to address the problem in the Niger Delta region. These include:

- *Community members have engaged in verbal confrontation with project implementers and the government;*
- *Community members usually sent written complains to project implementers and service providers;*
- *Community members have used both the print and electronic media to present their concerns;*
- *Adoption of project implementers staffers;*
- *Legal suits;*
- *Sabotage.*

However, all these methods have increased the level of restiveness, anxieties and uncertainties in the region (Okoh, 2005). It is therefore important to identify from the communities' perspective the factors that will improve and encourage their involvement in the decision making process of developmental projects so as to use their understanding of their immediate environment to contribute in achieving better environment management.

2.10 Conclusion

The section has identified numerous reasons why public participation has been sought after by legislators, practitioners, academics, non-governmental organisations and even the private sector. Even though there are benefits attached to their involvement, there remain formidable barriers that make their involvement in programmes and actions a daunting task. This section identified some of the barriers to adequate community involvement in environmental projects that involve them.

2.11 References

- Abelson, J., Forest, P. G., Eyles, J., Smith, P., Martin, E., and Gauvin, F. P, 2003.***Deliberations about deliberative methods: issues in the design and evaluation of public participation processes***. Social Science & Medicine, Vol. 57 (2003): 239-25
- Adomokai, R., and Sheate, W. R, 2004.***Community participation and environmental decision-making in the Niger Delta***. Environmental Impact Assessment Review, Vol. 24 (2004): 495-518.
- Aluko, M. A. O. 2004. Sustainable development, environmental degradation, the entrenchment of poverty in the Niger Delta of Nigeria. Journal of human ecology, Vol. 15, No. 1: 63-68.
- Ariweriokuma, S. 2010. The political economy of oil and gas in Africa: The case of Nigeria. Published by Routledge, New York, USA.
- Beierle, T. C. 1998. ***Public Participation in Environmental Decisions: An Evaluation Framework Using Social Goals***. Discussion Paper 99-06.
- Beierle, T. C., and Cayford, J. 2002. ***Democracy in Practice: Public participation in environmental decision***. Resources for the future press. Washington DC. USA.
- Botes, L., and Van Rensburg, D., 2000. ***Community participation in development: Nine plagues and twelve commandments***. Community Development Journal, Vol. 35, No 1: 41-58
- Bracht, N., and Tsouros, A., 1990. ***Principles and strategies of effective community participation***. Health Promotion International. Oxford University Press, Vol. 5, No 3.
- Chess, C., and Purcell, K. 1999.***Public Participation and the Environment: Do We Know What Works?*** Environmental science and technology, Vol. 33, No. 16.
- Creighton, J. L. 2005. The public participation handbook: Making better decision through citizen involvement. Published by Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, USA.
- Diduck, A., and Sinclair, A. J. 2002.***Public Involvement in Environmental Assessment: A case of the nonparticipants***. Environmental Management, Vol. 29, No 4: 578-588
- Frazer, E. D.G., Dougill. A. J., Mabee. W. E., Reed. M., McAlpine.P. 2006. ***Bottom up and top down: Analysis of participatory process for sustainability indicator identification as a pathway***

to community empowerment and sustainable environmental management. Journal of environmental management, Vol. 78: 114-127.

Frynas, J. G. 2001. *Corporate and State responses to anti-oil protest in the Niger delta*. African Affairs, Vol. 100 (2001): 27-54

Halvorsen, K. E. 2001. *Assessing Public Participation Techniques for Comfort, Convenience, Satisfaction, and Deliberation*. Environmental management, Vol. 28, No 2: 179-186

IAP2, 2007. *Core values for the practice of public participation 2007*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.iap2.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=4>. [Accessed 12 April 2011]

Ibeanu, I. 2000. *Oiling the Friction: Environmental Conflict Management in the Niger Delta, Nigeria*. Environmental Change and Security Project Report, Issue 6 (2000).

Idemudia, U. 2009. *Oil Extraction and Poverty Reduction in the Niger Delta: A Critical Examination of Partnership Initiatives*. Journal of Business Ethics Vol. 90:91–116

Ikelegbe, A. 2001. *Civil society, oil and conflict in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria: ramifications of civil society for a regional resource struggle*. Journal of African modern studies, Vol. 39, No 3: 437-469

Lasker, R. D., and Weiss, E. S. 2003. *Broadening Participation in Community Problem Solving: a Multidisciplinary Model to Support Collaborative Practice and Research*. Journal of urban health, Vol. 80, No 1.

Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 1992. *Environmental Impact Assessment Decree No 86 of 1992. Laws of the federation of Nigeria*. [Online] Available: <http://nigeria-law.org/Enviromental%20Impact%20Assessment%20Decree%20No.%2086%201992.htm>. [Accessed 17 May 2011]

Mathabatha, S., and Naidoo, D. 2004. *A review of public participation in the rural water and sanitation setting*. Water Research Commission (WRC). Report No 1381/1/04.

- Nwapi, C. 2010. *A Legislative Proposal for Public Participation in Oil and Gas Decision-Making in Nigeria*. Journal of African law, Vol. 54, No 2: 184-211.
- Obi, C., and Rustad, S. 2011. *Oil and insurgency in the Niger Delta: Managing the complex politics of petro-violence*. Published by Zed books, New York. USA.
- Okafor, F. 1982. *Community involvement in rural development: a field study in Bendel State of Nigeria*. Community development journal, Vol. 17, No 2: 1-7
- Okoh, R. N. 2007. *Conflict Management in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria: A participatory approach*. African journal on conflict resolution, Vol 5. No 1: 91.
- Oyefusi, A. 2008. *Oil and the Probability of Rebel Participation among Youths in the Niger Delta of Nigeria*. Journal of peace research, Vol. 45, No 4: 539-555.
- Oyefusi, A. 2007. Oil-dependence and civil conflicts in Nigeria. Centre for the study of African Economies. Paper 268
- Palerm, J. R. 2000. *An Empirical–Theoretical Analysis Framework for Public Participation in Environmental Impact Assessment*. Journal of Environmental Planning and Management, Vol. 43, No 5: 581–600
- Reed, M. S. 2008. *Stakeholder Participation for Environmental Management: a literature Review*, Biological Conservation, Vol. 141 (2008): 2417-2431
- Richardson, B. J., and Razzaque, J. 2005. *Public Participation in Environmental Decision-making*. Journal for environmental law. 2005: 165
- Rowe, G., and Frewer, L. J. 2004. *Evaluating Public-Participation Exercises: A Research Agenda*. Science Technology Human Values, Vol. 29, No 4: 512-556.
- Scott, D., 1999. *Guidelines for including public participation in the permitting process*: WRC Report No KV125/00.
- Shell Nigeria, 2011. *Shell interest in Nigeria*. [Online]. Available: http://www-static.shell.com/static/nga/downloads/pdfs/briefing_notes/shell_interests.pdf. [Accessed 20 October 2011]

Shell Nigeria, 2011. *The Gbaran-Ubie integrated oil and gas project*. [Online]. Available: http://www-static.shell.com/static/nga/downloads/pdfs/briefing_notes/gbaran.pdf. [Accessed 20 October 2011]

Shepherd, A., and Bowler, C. 1997. *Beyond the Requirements: Improving Public Participation in EIA*. Journal of Environmental Planning and Management, Vol.40, No 6: 725-738

Smith, B. L., 2003. *Public policy and public participation: Engaging citizens and communities in the development of public policy*. BLSmithGroupwork Inc. Halifax NS, Canada.

Stinchcombe, K., and Gibson, R. B. 2001. *Strategic Environmental Assessment as a means of pursuing sustainability: Ten advantages and ten challenges*. Journal of Environmental Assessment Policy and Management, Vol 3, No 3: 343-372.

United Nation Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), 2010. *Public participation in forestry in Europe and North America*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.unece.org/timber/docs/publications-other/report-participation.pdf>. [Accessed 26 April 2010]

SECTION THREE:

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section explains the different methods used to improve the reliability of the study outcome. Firstly, details of the research aim and objectives are provided. Secondly, the section introduced the research instruments utilised to achieve the research goals and objectives. Thirdly, it discussed the sampling methods and the participants consulted during the research; the techniques and method of data collection; and the procedure for maintaining the validity and reliability of the data. It highlighted the ethical issues associated with the participants.

3.2 Research Aim and Objectives

The overall aim of this research was to investigate and contribute to the understanding of the factors that may hinder community involvement in developmental projects in the oil producing Niger Delta region, using the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project as a case study. The goals of this research included:

1. To identify and highlight barriers that could hinder adequate community involvement in developmental projects.
2. To provide empirical evidence to the potential barriers to adequate community involvement using the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project as a case study.
3. To reveal opportunities for achieving greater involvement in developmental projects process from a community perspective using the case study.

3.3 Research design

This research designs section provided details of the approaches used in the research and emphasized their application in achieving the overall objectives of the research.

3.3.1 Research approach

The research followed the approach of an interpretive case study elaborated by Blanche and Kelly (1999) as a way that the opinions and desires of people are expressed and understood in such a manner that goes beyond quantifying in numerical terms, but describes the experiences of the people. There is usually a particular ontology, epistemology and methodology that characterises the interpretive approach of a research which Blanche and Kelly (1999: 123) further emphasized, suggesting that the researcher usually “assume[s] that people’s subjective experiences [which] are real and should be taken seriously (ontology), that we can understand others’ experiences by interacting with them and listening to what they tell us (epistemology), and that qualitative research techniques are best suited to this task (methodology)”. In addition, they highlighted that the approach helps to exploit the opinions and desires of people to create a better understanding of the nature and dynamics of the social world (p. 124).

It is for these reasons that the interpretive approach method was used in the study because it helps the researcher to easily interpret and understand the host/research community’s ontology and epistemology, while also granting the opportunity to analyse their perceptions of factors that could hinder them from participating in developmental projects. This methodology is different from the positivist school of thought (Neuman, 2001), which tends to impose a theory about how the world is and process to measure it without a more intensive examination that the interpretive approach offers.

3.3.2 Research method

The Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project was used as a case study for this research because it is one of the most recent mega-development projects in the Niger delta (Shell Nigeria, 2010). A case study methodology was found to be more efficient in the research because it provides thorough analysis of a particular situation in different social happenings (Babbie, 2008). Gillham (2000) further suggested the use of a case study approach in projects that tries to provide solutions to

different social problems by sourcing and collating various evidences that best describes the case and identifying the best solution that could be used to solve the problem.

Riege (2003: 10) provided support to the case study approach from another angle, describing it as “a method that commonly follow realistic modes of enquiry where the main objective is to discover new relationships of realities and build up an understanding of the meanings of experiences rather than verify predetermined hypothesis”. Yin (1994: 13), further asserted that “a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”. Yin (1994: 13) identified some basic characteristics as:

- *The study does not necessarily investigates only definite happenings but to comprehend situations from a particular point of view;*
- *The study must ensure that questions are not asked in such a way that exposes the limitations that are associated with the study and;*
- *The researcher must ensure that different data collection methods are explored during the study.*

The case study approach as asserted by Babbie (2008), Gillham (2000), Riege (2003) and Yin (1994) was deliberately selected for this research for the reasons already mentioned, and because this particular research attempts to cover contextual conditions and to provide an understanding/interpretation of true-life situations as regards to community involvement in decision making process of the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project.

3.3.3 Qualitative and Quantitative approach

This research also adopted a mixed method approach which was a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods. A qualitative approach was used because it helped the researcher to understand situations from true-life experiences, rather than using other approaches that may not give appropriate representation of the true situation (Babbie, 1998). While a quantitative approach is most appropriate for when numerical data were collected and critically

analysed to highlight and understand certain characteristics of the population using a sample size. (Durrheim, 1999).

However, it is important to note that the quantitative method was used to elaborate the qualitative method and to provide a general picture for the research. According to Bryman (1988), the combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods are usually applied when a researcher tries to understand and provide solutions to an identified problem that exist within a community, group or organisation, because the problems cannot readily be solved by depending on one method alone. Sometimes, these methods are insufficient thus requiring for a multi-strategic approach which Bryman (2001: 34), suggested occurs “when a researcher cannot rely completely on either a quantitative or a qualitative method alone and must buttress his or her findings with a method drawn from the other research strategy”.

Yin (1994) also argued that the results or findings derived from a study that used different methods of data collection and analysis has proven to be more credible and precise. This combined approach was implemented in this research because it assumed a more qualitative method which seeks to understand true-life situations of the communities involved in the project, and a quantitative method to buttress the findings that emerged from the qualitative method.

3.3.4 Research population and sample

The Niger Delta region consists of nine states of Nigeria (Abia, Akwa-ibom, Cross River, Rivers, Bayelsa, Delta, Imo, Ondo and Edo), it has a total population of 27 million people, 40 ethnic groups, 250 different dialects, and 75% live in the rural areas (Idemudia, 2007). This research was conducted in three local Niger Delta communities (Zamara, Gbaran and Koroama), chosen for their proximity to the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project and the accessibility to the researcher. A total of 45 participants were used for this research: 15 participants in Zamara, 18 participants in Gbaran, and 12 participants in Koroama.

The participants were selected from each of the three communities through a purposive sampling technique. Availability and the willingness to participate in the research were the key factors used in selecting the participants. Participants were also selected based on their age group, gender and their level of awareness/participation in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project.

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995: 12), “the purposive sampling technique is based on the judgement of the researcher regarding the characteristics of a representative sample and each participant is chosen on the basis of what the researcher thinks to be an average person”. Silverman (2000) explained that this sampling technique gives the researcher the leverage to select which case possess the characteristics that best describes what he/she wants to identify. Hence, purposive sampling technique was appropriate for this research because it made it easy for the researcher to relate with the participants and to enhance better communication.

3.3.5 Methods of data collection

3.3.5.1 Document review

The document review technique was one form of data collection technique used in this research. Available literatures on public participation was collected and reviewed, including journals, books, international guidelines for public participation and the EIA decree No. 86 of 1992 which is the only available environmental regulatory instrument in Nigeria that emphasized public involvement decision making (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004). One of the major advantages of this method is that the data is unobstructive; it is stable and can be reviewed repeatedly (Yin, 1994).

3.3.5.2 Questionnaire

The main source of data collection for this research was through the use of questionnaires (see Appendix 1). According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995: 107), “a questionnaire is a set of questions with fixed wording and sequence of presentation, as well as more or less precise indications of how to answer each question and must be presented to the participants in exactly the same manner to minimize the role and influence of the researcher and to enable a more objective comparison of the results”.

The questionnaire for this research consisted of five sections (Appendix 1). Section one consisted of questions that were provided for the personal information of the participants. Section two consisted of questions that tried to understand the level of participant’s awareness and their level of participation in the project. In section three questions that required participants to highlight some of the reasons that encouraged them to participate in the project process were asked. This is

followed by seven open-ended questions that required participants to elaborate their experience in process.

Section four consisted of questions that also required participants to highlight various reasons why they did not participate in the project process. This is also followed by six open-ended questions which allowed the participants to elaborate on their reason for not participating in the project. In section five, the entire questionnaire was categorised into major barriers and respondents were asked using a scale of 1-5 to highlight which of the barriers they considered as important based on their answers in the previous sections of the questionnaire (Appendix 1).

This structured form of the questionnaire was essential because it is the most direct way to get information from the respondents particularly those could not read or write (Bless and Higson-Smith, 1995). It also helps to overcome the problem participants may encounter in understanding and interpreting the words or questions; it helps the researcher to ensure that participants correctly understood the questions and the participants can also be asked for explanations concerning some of their answers, as a result the answers given will be clearer (Bless and Higson-Smith, 1995). Bless and Higson-Smith (1995) further emphasized that structured questionnaires makes the researcher to ensure that participants attempt all the questions and ensure that no question is omitted.

3.3.6 Data analysis

After the data had been collected, both the notes and the responses of participants from the questionnaires were summarised and analysed through the categorisation and sorting of the information acquired to establish the barriers to community involvement in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project. Some of the data were analysed using tables and graphical representations to show the perceptions of the participants on community involvement in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project. According to Johnson and Bhattacharyya (2011: 25), “categorical data are often presented graphically as a pie chart in which the segments of a circle exhibit the relative frequencies of the categories”.

As noted, in section five of the questionnaire, participants were asked to indicate which barriers they consider to be important, using a five-point sliding scale. The data in section five of the

questionnaire was analysed by grouping them into three classes: scale 4 and 5 were classified to be very important, scale 3 as neutral and scale 1 and 2 as unimportant. The Chi square analysis was performed on the grouped data to assess the independence in the participants' responses for what they considered important, unimportant or neutral. As a result, one would not expect equal proportion of responses for the three groups. Therefore, significant evidence from the chi square results was used to suggest independence of the responses between important, unimportant and neutral, and to confirm that the one with the highest proportion of response is considered the most significant of the three responses.

Chi-square statistics was also used to test for independence between the examined demographic variables and the barriers. Utts and Heckard (2007), describes chi-square test as a procedure for assessing the statistical significance of a relationship between categorical variables.

3.4 Research procedures followed

There were research procedures used as test application for this research to ensure that the methods were reliable and the conclusions were valid. Community involvement issues in environmental management have overtime become a subject of interest for the oil producing communities in the Niger Delta (Adomokai and Sheate, 2004). Hence, the participants were adequately informed about the objectives of the study, their role in the research and how the provided information will be documented exactly the way they said it. The participants were also informed that their participation in the study is at no cost to them and that they can opt out at any time. They were also assured that all the information provided were confidential. Furthermore, this study concentrated on applications provided to test the qualitative research. These include: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (all of which are discussed in further details below).

3.4.1 Credibility

The credibility of the research was guaranteed through establishing and utilising a feedback channel between the researcher and the communities involved in the research through the elders in the communities. This is consistent with Riege (2003) assertion on the importance of credibility in research. He suggested that to foster subsequent credibility of a research, formal

and informal feedback should be provided as the research progresses, and to further ensure credibility, the research should utilise triangulation techniques in which collected data is analysed using multiple techniques. To ensure credibility in this research, and in addition to implementing a feedback mechanism, the researcher personally monitored the process and ensured that all statements and findings were recorded as it is, without a personal bias or position taken.

3.4.2 Transferability

According to Riege (2003: 4), “transferability is comparable to the function of generalisation in qualitative research”. Riege (2003) stated that transferability can be achieved when unfamiliar respondents in a research provides related or different results from a particular situation. To ensure the transferability of this study, the researcher made sure that there was enough description of the findings in order for there to be easy transferability of the research outcomes. It was intended for the readers of this research to use these findings appropriately in their own settings and to ensure that their own findings conform to the theories used and described in this research. The researcher also ensured that transferability was achieved by making sure that the study investigates what it was originally intended to, the research context, and how the context response to the research objectives.

3.4.3 Dependability

According to Riege (2003), dependability in quantitative research is similar to consistency. The dependability test helps to show the firmness and reliability in the methods or techniques the researcher used to achieve the objectives of the study (Riege, 2003). The researcher achieved dependability by ensuring that the research questions were clearly stated and the research design was well aligned with the research questions. Furthermore, dependability was achieved by listening attentively to the respondents and making sure that they understood their role in the study. Any form of bias was addressed by ensuring that the results were interpreted accurately. Through this, the researcher demonstrated that similar findings can be achieved if other researchers used similar research techniques and procedures.

3.4.4 Confirmability

According to Riege (2003: 5), “confirmability is analogous to the notion of neutrality and the test assesses whether the interpretation of the data is drawn in a logical and unprejudiced manner”. Riege (2003: 5) also emphasized that “the test assesses the extent at which the conclusions are the most reasonable one obtainable from the data”. In conforming to the test of confirmability as suggested by Riege (2003), the researcher ensured that adequate description were given about the techniques and methods the study adopted in carrying out the research. The researcher also achieved confirmability by ensuring that the appropriate techniques were used to identify the process of events being investigated, and therefore did not base the findings on subjective perceptions and judgements.

Furthermore, carefully outlining the research questions and the objectives of the research and the finding collated and interpreted in such a way that reflects relevant and accurate outcomes contributed to confirmability. The researcher ensured that multiple sources of data collection were employed to conform to confirmability and to retain these data and make them available for reanalysis by others where necessary.

3.5 Ethical consideration

There is an obligation placed on researchers to conduct their research in a professional manner and ethical issues that may arise during the process must be taken into consideration (Babbie, 1992). Furthermore, permission was obtained from the Rhodes University Higher Degrees Committee to conduct the research. In addition, the researcher also ensured that the community heads of the three communities involved in the research granted their permission before proceeding with the research. The participants were well informed about the reasons for the research and what it aimed to achieve. They were also made to understand that their participation was voluntary. They were neither forced nor bribed to participate. It was clear that if any of the participants felt uncomfortable, they could opt out from the research process at any point in time (Babbie, 1992). It was also clear to them that their privacy will be maintained throughout the research process and those who did not wish for their voices to be recorded or for their contributions to be reported were omitted.

3.6 Conclusion

This section highlighted the appropriate methods and techniques used in achieving the goals and objectives of the research, as well as addressing the research questions. The research adopted a case study approach to provide an understanding/interpretation of true-life situations and it was described using an interpretive research paradigm. This section further described the research procedures used in addressing the research question and ensured that the quality of the study meets the required standard. Finally, matters relating to conducting the research in an ethical manner were also discussed.

3.7 References

- Adomokai, R., and Sheate, W. R, 2004.*Community participation and environmental decision-making in the Niger Delta*. Environmental Impact Assessment Review, Vol. 24 (2004): 495-518.
- Babbie, E. 1998.*The practice of social research*. Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company. USA.
- Blanche, M. T., and Kelly, K., 1999.*Interpretive methods*, in Blanche, M. T., and Durrheim, K., 1999.*Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences*. University of Cape Town press. Cape Town. South Africa
- Bless, C. And Higson-Smith, C.1995. *Fundamentals of social research methods: an African perspective*. Cerda Press, Eloit Avenue, Eppindust , Cape Town. South Africa
- Bryman, A. 1988.*Quantity and quality in social research*.Published by Routledge, London.
- Bryman, A. 2001.*Social research methods*.Published by Oxford University Press, New York.
- Durrheim.K., 1999.*Quantitative measurement*, in Blanche, M. T., and Durrheim, K., 1999.*Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences*. University of Cape Town press. Cape Town. South Africa
- Gillham, B., 2000. *Case study research methods*. Tj international Ltd, Padstow, Cornwall, Great Britain.
- Idemudia, U. 2007. Corporate partnerships and community development in the Nigeria oil industry: Strengths and limitations. United Nations Research institute for Social development, 2007.
- Johnson. R. A., and Bhattacharyya. G. K., 2011. *Statistics: Principles and methods (6ed)*.John Wiley & Sons. Hoboken, New Jersey, USA.
- Neuman, L. W. 2001. *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Riege, A. M. 2003. *Validity and reliability test in case study research: a literature review with “hands- on” application for each research phase*. Qualitative market research: An international journal, Vol. 6, No. 2: 75-86

Shell Nigeria, 2010. *Nigeria’s Gbaran-Ubie integrated oil and gas project comes on-stream 2010*. [Online].

Available:http://www.shell.com.ng/home/content/nga/aboutshell/media_centre/news_and_media_releases/2010/gbaran_onstream.html. [Accessed 11June 2011]

Silverman, D. 2005. *Doing qualitative research (2ed)*. SAGE Publication Limited. London.

Sliver.D., 2000.*Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook*.SAGE Publication Limited. London.

Utts.J. M, and Heckard. R. F., 2007. *Mind on Statistics (3ed)*. Brooks/Cole, Cengage learning. Belmont, USA.

Yin, R. K. 1994.*Case study research: Design and methods*, 2nd edition, Sage, London.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Questionnaire

Introduction

The aim of this questionnaire is to assist the researcher identify the potential barriers to adequate community involvement in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project. This questionnaire is going to be distributed amongst an estimate of 20 people in each of the following communities: Zamara, Gbaran and Koroama. Furthermore, it is important to note that participation in this research is voluntary and no participant will be forced or bribed to participate. However, participants are encouraged to answer the questions freely and to understand that the information provided will be strictly confidential. It is also important for participants to note that the researcher will record all information provided as it is, with the aid of a voice recorder. In addition, participants are free to opt out of the process at anytime they are no longer comfortable with the process. Please fill out the following questions:

Section one

Personal information

Gender: _____ Age: _____

Profession: _____ Educational background: _____

Community: _____ Role within the community: _____

Section two

1. Do you understand the role of public participation in developmental projects?

(a) I don't understand ☐ (b) I partially understand ☐

(c) I fully understand ☐

2. Rate your level of awareness in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project process (Scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being no awareness (i.e. don't know about the project) and 5 being fully conversant with the development and implementation of the entire project.

1) ☐ 2) ☐ 3) ☐ 4) ☐ 5) ☐

3. Indicate your awareness level on the following phases of the project using the criteria listed below (i.e. 1) = No awareness, etc)

1) No awareness ☐

2) Poor awareness ☐

3) General awareness ☐

4) Good awareness ☐

5) Significant awareness ☐

- a) Pre-feasibility of the project

1) ☐ 2) ☐ 3) ☐ 4) ☐ 5) ☐

- b) Feasibility of the project

1) ☐ 2) ☐ 3) ☐ 4) ☐ 5) ☐

- c) Development of the project (pre-construction)

1) ☐ 2) ☐ 3) ☐ 4) ☐ 5) ☐

- d) Construction phase of the project

1) ☐ 2) ☐ 3) ☐ 4) ☐ 5) ☐

4. Rate your level of participation in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project process (Scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being no participation and 5 being consistently involved throughout the project process.)

1) ☐ 2) ☐ 3) ☐ 4) ☐ 5) ☐

5. How did you get to know about the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project?

1) Friends ☐ 2) Neighbours ☐ 3) Community meetings ☐

4) Never heard about it ☐ 5) Other ☐

If other, please specify:

.....
.....

6. I participated in the Gbaran-ubie oil and gas project in the following ways (check all that apply)

1) Attended workshops ☐

2) Attended or watched planning meetings ☐

3) One-on-one discussion with project implementer ☐

4) Provided testimony at a public hearing ☐

5) Provided written comments by mail or email ☐

6) Didn't participate ☐

7) Other ☐

If other, please specify:

.....
.....

Section three

Please fill out this section if you participated in the project process.

7. Information on the draft Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project plan and public meetings was readily available:

- 1) Strongly disagree ☐ 2) Disagree ☐ 3) Neutral ☐
4) Agree ☐ 5) Strongly agree ☐

Please provide information to motivate your answer:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

8. I received information relating to the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project and public meeting in the following ways: (check all that apply)

- 1) Shell website ☐ 2) Direct mailings ☐ 3) Newspaper articles ☐
4) Public meeting presentations and discussions ☐
5) Neighbourhood meetings ☐ 6) Other ☐

If other, please specify:

.....
.....

9. Which means of public involvement and getting information did you find most useful? (Please choose top three, rating them 1, 2 and 3 within the box provided below)

- 1) Shell website ☐ 2) Direct mailings ☐ 3) Newspaper articles ☐

4) Public meeting presentations and discussions ☐

5) Neighbourhood meetings ☐

6) Other ☐

If other, please specify:

.....

.....

10. If you used the Shell Nigeria website to follow the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project, how useful was it at providing information in an efficient and timely manner?

1) Did not visit the website ☐ 2) Useless ☐ 3) Deficient ☐

4) Sufficient ☐ 5) Exceptional ☐

11. Information and materials in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project were understood (materials include draft plan, ordinances, maps, reports, memos, public comments, meeting minutes etc)

1) Strongly disagree ☐ 2) Disagree ☐ 3) Neutral ☐

4) Agree ☐ 5) Strongly agree ☐

12. Which pieces of information/material was best understood

1) Project draft plan ☐ 2) Ordinances ☐ 3) Maps ☐

4) Reports ☐ 5) Memos ☐ 6) Public comments ☐

7) Meeting minutes ☐ 8) Other ☐

If other, please specify and provide information to motivate your answer above:

.....

.....

.....

13. Which pieces of information/materials were least understood?

1) Project draft plan ☐ 2) Ordinances ☐ 3) Maps ☐

4) Reports ☐ 5) Memos ☐ 6) Public comments ☐

- 7) Meeting minutes ☐ 8) Other ☐

If other, please specify and provide information to motivate your answer above:

.....

.....

.....

14. The public meetings and workshops were run effectively

- 1) Strongly disagree ☐ 2) Disagree ☐ 3) Neutral ☐
- 4) Agree ☐ 5) Strongly agree ☐

15. The public meetings provided mechanisms or incentives (like provision of transportation to meeting venues, provision of food during meeting, etc) that motivated and encouraged you to participate

- 1) Strongly disagree ☐ 2) Disagree ☐ 3) Neutral ☐
- 4) Agree ☐ 5) Strongly agree ☐

16. Adequate opportunities were provided for your comments during the development of the project

- 1) Strongly disagree ☐ 2) Disagree ☐ 3) Neutral ☐
- 4) Agree ☐ 5) Strongly agree ☐

Please provide details to motivate your answer:

.....

.....

.....

.....

17. Can you describe your experience to your participation in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project?

Overall:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Negative aspect(s):

.....
.....
.....
.....

Positive aspect(s):

.....
.....
.....
.....

18. What other barriers do you think can hinder adequate community involvement in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

19. How do you think community involvement can be improved in developmental projects like the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

20. What in your opinion is the role of the project developers in the public participation process of the project?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

21. What in your opinion is the role of the government agencies in the public participation process of the project?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

22. What in your opinion is the role of the community in the public participation process of the project?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

23. What in your opinion is the role of community leaders in the public participation process of the project?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Section four

Please fill this section if you *did not participate* in the project

24. What were the key reasons for you not participating in the public process of the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

25. Information on the draft Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas plan and public meetings were readily available

- 1) Strongly disagree ☐ 2) Disagree ☐ 3) Neutral ☐
4) Agree ☐ 5) Strongly agree ☐
6) Don't know (wasn't interested to check) ☐

26. Information relating to the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas, in your opinion, would have been best accessible to you through the following ways: (please check all that apply)

- 1) Shell website ☐ 2) Direct mailings ☐ 3) Newspaper articles ☐
4) Public meeting presentations and discussions ☐
5) Neighbourhood meetings ☐ 6) Other ☐

If other, please specify:

.....
.....
.....

27. What is your general perception about community involvement in the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

28. How do you think community involvement can be improved in developmental projects like the Gbaran-Ubie oil and gas project?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

29. What in your opinion is the role of the project developers in the public participation process of the project?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

30. What in your opinion is the role of the government agencies in the public participation process of the project?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

31. What in your opinion is the role of the community in the public participation process of the project?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

32. What in your opinion is the role of community leaders in the public participation process of the project?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Section five

In your opinion, please rank the most important barrier to public participation using scale 1 to 5, where 1 is very important and 5 is least important. Please tick the boxes provided:

1) Lack of adequate information

1) ☐ 2) ☐ 3) ☐ 4) ☐ 5) ☐

2) Lack of resources

1) ☐ 2) ☐ 3) ☐ 4) ☐ 5) ☐

3) Lack of impact in ultimate decision

1) ☐ 2) ☐ 3) ☐ 4) ☐ 5) ☐

4) Lack of motivation or interest or time

1) ☐ 2) ☐ 3) ☐ 4) ☐ 5) ☐

5) Lack of equal opportunity to participate

1) ☐ 2) ☐ 3) ☐ 4) ☐ 5) ☐

6) Others

1) ☐ 2) ☐ 3) ☐ 4) ☐ 5) ☐

If other, please specify and also rank:

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for participating.

APPENDIX 2

Respondent's opinion on reasons to non-participation

	Important	Unimportant	Neutral
Lack of adequate information	31	5	9
Lack of resources	14	22	9
Lack of impact in ultimate decision	28	10	7
Lack of motivation or interest or time	12	15	18
Lack of equal opportunity to participate	25	8	12
Others	22	11	12

Calculated Chi-square test (Goodness of fit)

Options	Chi-square value	Critical value	P-value
Lack of adequate information	24.464671	5.991	4.87E-06
Lack of resources	5.641420864	5.991	0.059563612
Lack of impact in ultimate decision	15.93727	5.991	0.000346
Lack of motivation or interest or time	1.1904939	5.991	0.5514264
Lack of equal opportunity to participate	9.980242	5.991	0.006805
Others	4.604589	5.991	0.100029

Appendix 3

Calculated chi-square for each demographic variable and reasons for non-participation

Response Questions	Response Choice	Gender		Chi-square test Results	
		Male	Female	Critical value	P-value
Lack of information	Important	25	6	2.75659824	0.252006822
	Unimportant	3	2		
	Neutral	5	4		
Lack of resources	Important	10	4	2.290436836	0.31815442
	Unimportant	18	4		
	Neutral	5	4		
Lack of impact in ultimate decision	Important	23	5	4.492695	0.105785
	Unimportant	7	3		
	Neutral	3	4		
Lack of motivation or interest or time	Important	8	4	3.863636364	0.144884532
	Unimportant	9	6		
	Neutral	16	2		
Lack of equal opportunity to participate	Important	18	7	0.051136	0.974756
	Unimportant	6	2		
	Neutral	9	3		
Others	Important	17	5	0.720558	0.697482
	Unimportant	7	4		
	Neutral	9	3		

Response Questions	Response Choice	Age Group (Years)					Chi-square test Results	
		16-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	Critical value	P-value
Lack of information	Important	4	14	10	2	1	6.64255	0.575643
	Unimportant	1	1	1	1	1		
	Neutral	2	3	1	2	1		
Lack of resources	Important	3	5	2	3	1	6.29138322	0.614628421
	Unimportant	3	11	6	1	1		
	Neutral	1	2	4	1	1		
Lack of impact in the ultimate decision	Important	4	14	6	3	1	4.313265	0.827812
	Unimportant	2	2	4	1	1		
	Neutral	1	2	2	1	1		
Lack of motivation or interest or time	Important	2	5	3	1	1	1.238294	0.996249
	Unimportant	3	6	3	2	1		
	Neutral	2	7	6	2	1		
Lack of equal opportunity to participate	Important	5	10	6	3	1	1.90369	0.983823
	Unimportant	1	3	2	1	1		
	Neutral	1	5	4	1	1		
Others	Important	3	10	6	2	1	1.210768	0.996534
	Unimportant	2	4	3	1	1		
	Neutral	2	4	3	2	1		

Response Questions	Response Choice	Profession				Chi-square test Results	
		Farming	Trader	Small scale business	Civil society	Critical value	P-value
Lack of information	Important	14	10	6	1	8.21799	0.222564
	Unimportant	1	1	1	2		
	Neutral	5	2	1	1		
Lack of resources	Important	6	4	3	1	7.095405	0.312114
	Unimportant	13	5	3	1		
	Neutral	1	4	2	2		
Lack of impact in the ultimate decision	Important	16	5	5	2	6.367376374	0.383318461
	Unimportant	2	5	2	1		
	Neutral	2	3	1	1		
Lack of motivation or interest or time	Important	5	3	2	2	1.573077	0.954493
	Unimportant	6	5	3	1		
	Neutral	9	5	3	1		
Lack of equal opportunity to participate	Important	13	8	2	2	4.801586538	0.569501505
	Unimportant	2	2	3	1		
	Neutral	5	3	3	1		
Others	Important	12	6	3	1	3.613636	0.728795
	Unimportant	3	4	3	1		
	Neutral	5	3	2	2		

Response Questions	Response Choice	Qualification			Chi-square test results	
		Primary	Secondary	University	Critical value	P-value
Lack of information	Important	20	10	1	4.449906	0.348529
	Unimportant	2	2	1		
	Neutral	5	2	2		
Lack of resources	Important	8	4	2	2.25061	0.689775
	Unimportant	15	6	1		
	Neutral	4	4	1		
Lack of impact in ultimate decision	Important	18	8	2	1.140306122	0.887825597
	Unimportant	6	3	1		
	Neutral	3	3	1		
Lack of motivation or interest or time	Important	7	4	1	0.919643	0.921726
	Unimportant	8	5	2		
	Neutral	12	5	1		
Lack of equal opportunity to participate	Important	21	3	1	13.84196	0.007817
	Unimportant	3	4	1		
	Neutral	3	7	2		
Others	Important	17	4	1	6.19724026	0.184894522
	Unimportant	4	5	2		
	Neutral	6	5	1		