

Discourse And Semantics Of Oil Theft In The Niger Delta Region By Select National Newspapers (2012-2022)

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Abstract: This study examines discourse and semantics of oil theft in the Niger delta region by select national newspapers (2012-2022). The objectives of the study are to find out the depth of coverage of oil theft in the Niger Delta region by select national newspapers, ascertain the frequency of coverage of oil theft in the Niger Delta, determine the meaning of placements, investigate discursive role of the media in the coverage of oil theft in the Niger Delta region, ascertain the semantic role of the media in the coverage of the oil theft in the Niger Delta region, investigate the effects of coverage on the oil, theft in the Niger Delta, know how to curtail the rate of oil theft in the Niger Delta among others. The study was guided by some theories which are media dependency, knowledge gap and technological determinism, queer theories. The study used a mixture of qualitative-newspaper analysis and quantitative research. Data gathered with questionnaires were presented in frequencies and tables. Findings of the study showed that there is a low extent on the depth of coverage and frequency of the coverage of oil theft in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, all forms of knowledge, there is the presence of oil theft and refining in Niger Delta region of Nigeria, whether practical, applied, theoretical etc knowledge are involved in oil theft and refining regarding health and safety measures in Niger Delta region of Nigeria, the income level is much higher than any other local job available to the people of Niger Delta State, the peoples view is that the illegal activity should be put to a stop majorly because of its harmfulness to the environment and to the individuals concerned, the activity of the oil theft and refining has made the operators not to be sure if they will switch to government job when available, the rate of the coverage of oil theft is to a low extent among others. And the study therefore, recommends that there should be more efforts on the discursive role of the media in the coverage of oil theft in the Niger Delta region, government should look into the oil refiners who have vast knowledge and stop them to use such for this illegal activity; rather engage on something legal and meaningful, there should be a thorough implementation of the existing laws and penalties for anybody caught in oil theft among others.

Keywords: Discourse, Semantics, Oil Theft, Niger Delta Region, National Newspapers.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Media has played and continues to play a crucial role in the coverage of oil vandalisation in our country. It is agreed in some quarters that crude oil is the life wire of modern economy and it has now become the paramount commodity in the world that one derived millions of other derivative products from crude oil and it now considered the "mother of all commodities" because of its use in the manufacturing of numerous products, including gasoline, synthetic fabrics, plastics and pharmaceuticals (Investing answers, 2011). Countries today cannot survive without crude oil products that is why Smil (2008) describes it as the lifeblood of modern world, adding that, without oil, there would be no globalization, no plastic, little transport, and a worldwide landscape that few would recognize. Yergin (2008) also calls it the world's most important resource. In recognition of the importance of crude oil, Feyide (1986 p.1) aptly stated that: "oil is raw material as well as a convenient and effective source of energy. In the form of energy, it increases man's capacity to get work done.

Though Nigeria is trying to diversify from being a mono-economy by developing other mineral resources is still recognized as a mono-economic nation that largely depend on the oil sector for its economic survival. The Nigerian economy is dependent on the exploitation of crude oil and the nation's future is very much tied to the commodity (Okere, 2013). Indeed, oil and gas resources from Niger Delta region accounts for over 90% of Nigeria's export and foreign exchange earnings, and over 70% of total Nigerian revenue (Ekuerhware, 2002). This informs Wilson (2012) argument that the increase in crude oil production affects directly the revenue base and development programmes of Nigerian state.

Crude oil theft has been part of history of oil exploration for a very long time. But in recent times, this issue has assumed dangerous dimensions with the damage caused to the national economy and its impact on sub-nationals in Nigeria.

The print and electronic media have been awash lately with reports of discoveries of pipeline vandalism and crude oil theft in the Niger Delta, resulting in multi-million naira losses to Nigeria daily. The impact of this malaise has been so monumental that Nigeria is on the brink of the cliffs economically. The revelations have been astonishing and everyone is concerned.

In its Saturday, 8th October 2022 edition, *ThisDAY* newspaper reported by Dike Onuwamaeze carried as one of its headlines, the report that lawmakers had charged President Muhammadu Buhari to fight oil thieves, whom they said had declared a war on Nigeria. The same newspaper also reported that a former warlord, Tompolo, who had recently been engaged by the Nigerian Government to help stem the tide of crude oil theft in the Niger Delta had exposed security officials as being party to and protagonists of this

criminality. The report further highlighted that “sixteen hidden tapping points on the trans-forcados/Ramos pipeline had been uncovered”.

Many more illegal pipeline tap points have since been discovered and the discoveries are likely to continue in the coming days, weeks and months. There was even a report recently of the destruction by military men of a ship which was used to convey stolen crude in an apparent effort to conceal those behind the theft. Allegations and insinuations have been rife to the effect that top functionaries of Government and prominent people in society are deeply involved in this illegal business. Hopefully, more facts will emerge about this in the coming days.

Crude oil theft has gone on in Nigeria for years. Unfortunately, not much has been done to stem its tide. For a country that depends almost entirely on this economic good for its sustenance, this apathy is difficult to understand.

Nigeria currently faces an existential threat. Crude oil is the mainstay of the economy. Experts say that Nigeria loses about 600,000 barrels of crude oil per day to oil thieves. The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) however admits losses of 470,000 barrels per day. While this discrepancy exists, what is, however certain is that much of our crude oil is stolen on a daily basis.

From NNPC estimates, about 700million dollar worth of crude oil is lost to oil theft monthly. Between January and July 2022, Nigeria lost 10 billion Dollars to this crime and this is equivalent to 4.3trillion Naira (at N430 official exchange rate to the dollar) which is more than fifty percent of Nigeria's Foreign Reserves. The figure is also more than double Nigeria's total revenue between January and April 2022. It is on record that during this period, Nigeria's total revenue was unable to service its debt. Nigeria had to borrow for everything, including payment of salaries.

Data obtained from organization of petroleum exporting countries (OPEC) show that the average production quota for Nigeria was 1.73million bpd during the first seven (7) months of the 2022s. In that period, crude oil production fell to 1.1 million bpd (July, 2022) from 1.4million bpd in January (a shortfall of about 270,000bpd). Incidentally, July recorded the highest price per barrel of 117.25 Dollars in all of 2022 so far. In January, crude oil sold for an average of 93.95dollars per barrel (organization of petroleum exporting countries (OPEC) basket price) and in March, price pumped to 113 dollars. While Nigeria's production quota increased to 1.71million bpd, production actually dropped to 1.34million bpd- a shortfall of 378,000 dollars resulting in a loss of 42.8 million revenues daily. In April, average price dropped to 105 dollars per barrel, however, organization of petroleum exporting countries (OPEC) increased Nigeria's production quota to 1.73mbpd. Unfortunately, we could only do 1.32 mbpd. In May, output further dropped to 1.23mbpd compared to an average of 1.75mbpd allowed by organization of petroleum exporting countries (OPEC) which represents a shortfall of 520,000mbpd and a loss of 59m dollars loss daily. In July, and for the 7th consecutive month, production also dropped to 1.18mbpd as against organization of petroleum exporting countries (OPEC), 1.79mbpd quota. Production shortfall was 610,000 barrels pd (66.86million dollars loss in revenue every day). The value of oil stolen from Nigeria is said to be equivalent to the budget of Osun, Kwara and Ekiti States. Igbuku, 2014).

As expected, this development has occasioned severe damage to the economy and its devastating effects include, reduced exports, and the shutdown of production by some companies, factors which have virtually crippled the country's fiscal stability.

All this is happening in the midst of an apparent oil boom, the first since 2015, with crude oil selling at an average of 112 dollars per barrel for the first half of 2022. The highest ever recorded was 147.27 Dollars per barrel in July, 2008 hence this study, the discourse and semantics of the coverage of oil theft in the Niger Delta of Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In the year 2021, there was incessant exploration and vandalisation of oil in the state that made the Rivers State government to invade many bushes in search of these vandals. This oil exploration and exploitation was occasioned by heavy sicknesses as a result of the discharge of black sooth. The problem of oil theft and vandalism in the Nigeria and the national economy cannot be overemphasized in the sense that our sites have turned to a deserted area due to constant oil exploration, oil theft and illegal bunkering activities are carried out in the high seas and oil export terminals, thereby increasing the activities of the sea pirates in the sub-region (Wilson, 2014). The pirates attack oil investors and their investments, while the state security agents give counter attack to the pirates, thereby leading to constant violence and attacks in the Gulf of Guinea. As a result of violence perpetuated by these actors and sea pirates, its post threats on the peace and security of the West African States, particularly those along the coastal areas, where the oil vessels pass through to Europe, America and Asia (Wilson, 2014). Crude oil is the major catalyst that drives the Nigerian economy and by implication the determinant of its entire socio-political configuration. Consequently, anything that covertly or overtly affects oil production in Nigeria poses a direct threat to her national economy, political stability, territorial integrity and national security (Odalonu, 2015). The efforts of Nigerian government to curb oil thefts, illegal bunkering and pipeline vandalism remains a mirage. It has undertaken some policy measures in response to minimize even not eradicate the menace of vandals over the years. These cause serious economic, security and environmental challenges to the Nigerian state. The work observed that vandalism and illegal bunkering has resulted in economic recession by the Nigerian state and oil companies, environmental degradation, insecurity in the Niger Delta region and threat to national and regional security. The work also explored the efforts of successive Nigerian governments to curb the problems and posited that success has not been achieved due to the enthroned corruption by Nigerian elites, high level of youth unemployment, institutional decay and dysfunctions, poor governance, ineffective and corrupt law enforcement agencies, international crime collaborations and lack of political wills by those in authority and affluence etc. Ending of oil theft, vandalism and illegal bunkering, the work observed some findings and recommends measures and posits that serious approach and drastic efforts are needed to stop this pest called oil theft, illegal bunkering and pipeline vandalisation.

Curiously, in addition to the crushing effect of oil theft, Nigeria continues to bear the huge burden of fuel subsidy fraud. The Federal Government says it will cost Nigeria N6.9 trillion to fund subsidy in 2023. The Economist in the latest edition of its monthly breakfast meetings at the Lagos Business School reported that between 2015 to 2020, 5.5 billion dollars was spent on subsidy. But in 2021 alone, Nigeria spent a whopping sum of 3.8 billion dollars on subsidy and 6.2 billion dollars in just the first quarter of 2022. The projection for subsidy in 2022 is 15.7 billion dollars which is almost double the budget of all the 36 states of the federation in 2021 which was an equivalent of 9.8 billion dollars. **As economic turbulence is exacerbating in Nigeria, grand oil theft in the Niger Delta** by local vandals and international criminal networks is gaining momentum. Essentially, Nigeria, the 11th largest oil-producing country in the world, cannot meet the quota assigned to it by oil producing countries (OPEC) because of unparalleled oil theft. Incidentally, Africa's largest economy is losing billions of dollars at a time its external reserves are low. Oil theft has remained stubbornly intricate, a chronic menace in Nigeria. It thrives on corruption and the weakness of the union and its institutions; eradicating it demands a workable strategy and strong political will.

Nigeria's oil economy is in a complete mess. According to the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission, Nigeria lost \$3.27 billion to oil vandals in the 14 months to February 2022. In a depressed economy, which is also hamstrung by poor infrastructure that is a lot of money. Due to its inability to refine locally, the country imported petrol worth N3.97 trillion, gas oil worth N568.5 billion, and lubricating oil for N272.3 billion in 2021, says the National Bureau of Statistics. There are hefty bills for other petroleum products.

All this paints Nigeria's oil economy in an ironic moment; the paradox enhanced by the Russia-Ukraine war that has caused a price upsurge in the global energy market. Instead of profiting from this, as other oil producers are doing, Nigeria is falling headlong into an economic hole as oil prices soar above \$100 per barrel, exceeding Nigeria's \$62pb 2022 budget benchmark.

The twin menace of oil theft and importation of refined petroleum products is the primary cause. In contrast, Norway, Western Europe's largest oil producer, is making an extra income of \$5,680 every second, and is projected to rake in \$170 billion extra revenue because of the war, say analysts at Nordea Bank, the largest financial group in the Nordic countries.

It is a shame that Nigeria is suffering losses when global oil prices are rising because of petrol subsidies, estimated at N3 trillion annually. This headwind is aggravated by the grand larceny from the recent lamentations of industry players. Apart from Tony Elumelu, the chief executive officers of Heirs Holdings, who has consistently demanded strong action against oil theft by the government, Austin Avuru, the founding chief executive officers of Seplat Energy, an oil union leader, Festus Osifo, and Central Bank of Nigeria Governor, Godwin Emefiele, have all decried the worsening robbery. (Arise television, 2nd marchm 2022

Consequently, Nigeria has been unable to meet the 1.8 million barrels per day production quota assigned to it by oil cartel, operational petroleum Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Government data for the past few years suggest that Nigeria is doing 1.2 million bpd to 1.4 million bpd. This is a huge revenue loss. It implies that up to 400,000 bpd is being lost to theft. This has two legs: Nigeria loses \$2 billion yearly to domestic vandals, the Nigerian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative says. On the international front, Nigeria loses \$4 billion annually to the entrenched criminal gangs operating in the international waters.

These are huge resources in the hands of non-state actors. They use it to purchase weaponry and entrench themselves further in oil theft. Dismantling these networks is a Herculean task, but it can be done. It demands iron resolve and willingness to deploy all resources to protect national assets. Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil exporter, foiled attempts on March 19 that targeted its energy infrastructure in Yanbu, Khamis Mushait and Dhahran al-Janoub using a ballistic missile and several armed drones. Its forces also intercepted other attacks on its oil assets between March 20 and March 23, Al Arabiya, a Saudi TV station, reported. By deploying technology, it curtails sabotage on its prized assets. Nigeria should do likewise. Type of media use in the coverage of oil theft in Niger Delta, the effect of oil theft in the national economy of Niger Delta, the discourse and semantic reportage of oil theft in Niger Delta, how to curtail the rate of oil theft in the national economy of Niger Delta, challenges of the media in the coverage of oil theft Niger Delta and the solutions to the effect of oil theft will be addressed in this study.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The following objectives will guide the study

The discourse and semantics of oil theft in the Niger Delta Region by Select National Newspapers (202-2022). Specifically, this study seeks to:

1. Find out the depth of coverage of oil theft in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.
2. Ascertain the frequency of coverage of oil theft in the Niger delta of Nigeria
3. Determine the meaning of placements such as headlines, font size, page size, article locations and pictorial representations.
4. Find out the conversation stylistics that were employed in the coverage delivery of oil theft in the Niger Delta of Nigeria.
5. Find out the use of language resonates with the Niger Delta socio-cultural context.
6. Determine if the structure of texts on oil theft convey implicit and explicit meanings.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the study:

1. What is the depth of coverage of oil theft in the Niger Delta of Nigeria?
2. What is the frequency of the coverage of oil theft in the Niger Delta of Nigeria?
3. What is the meaning of placements such as headlines, font sizes, page size, article locations and pictorial representations?
4. What is the conversation stylistics that were employed in the coverage delivery of oil theft in the Niger Delta of Nigeria?

5. What is the language resonate with Niger Delta socio-cultural context?
6. Does the structure of texts on oil theft convey implicit and explicit in the Niger Delta?

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

A theory is a set of ideas used in explaining or predicting phenomena. Theories are used to understand how things are likely to happen. A theory is any concept that is tested and testable which explains an occurrence (Wimmer & Dominic, 2003).

2.2.1 Media System Dependency Theory

This theory is reported to have been propounded in (1976) by the duo of Sandra Ball-Roacheach and Melvin De Fleur (Uwakwe, 2010, Anaeto, Onabajo and Osifeso, 2008). The core notion of the Media System Dependency Theory is that the more a person depends on having his/her information needs met by media use, the more important the media's role will be in his/her life and the more influence the media will ultimately have on him/her (Baran and Davies, 2003). What this indicates, according to Obaje (2011), is that the more a person relies on a particular medium (like online newspaper) to meet his/her information needs, the more important the role online newspaper plays in his/her life will be, and as a result, the more he/she will be influenced (by online newspapers). Uwakwe (2010) extends the scope of the theory to include the assumption that the audience depends on media information to meet set goals. Consequently, the degree of audience dependency on information from the mass media varies and the more dependent members of the audience are on the media, the more influence the media will have on them.

Some basic principles or assumptions have been identified with the Media System Dependency Theory. However, those summarized by Anaeto et al (2008) and Baran and Davies (2003) are outlined below to enable us pinpoint relationships between the theory and readership of online newspapers in Nigeria:

1. The basis of media influence on the audience lies in a relationship among the larger society, the media's role and the members of the audience.
2. Appropriate review of the related literature has been carried out in this study which is anchored on the media dependency theory, knowledge gap theory and technological determinism theory which means that they are reviewed in relation to the topic under study.
3. The concept and historical perspective and expert views of the topic is reviewed bringing to the fore the various concepts, perspectives and expert views of the phenomenon including its nature, origin and classifications. Another aspect of the review was the review of oil theft the, types, usage and media coverages of the effects of oil theft in Niger Delta.
4. Newspapers frames were reviewed to ascertain their reportage mode, frequency of coverage, methodologies, conclusions and recommendations as regards to oil theft in Niger Delta.
5. This study goes further to investigate some empirical studies, their objectives, methodologies, findings, conclusions and recommendations without failing to highlight the potholes which the reviewed studies could not fill but have been covered by this research work.

RESEARCH METHOD

This means the manner, designs, procedures or tactics or technics as well as assumptions on which the research will be conducted. There are different kinds of research which includes; doctrinal research, empirical research, descriptive research, analytical research, fundamental research, applied research, conceptual research, quantitative and qualitative (content analysis) research, comparative, historical research and legal research.

Data Analysis

The information gathered from these interviews was objective, although an attempt was made to present an account from perspectives and levels. Videos of the newspaper coverage of oil theft was made possible to gain an increasingly profound understanding of each interviewer's viewpoint and perspectives as it regards discourse and semantics of oil theft in the Niger Delta was carried out through phone calls. Prominent chiefs and community leaders were interviewed, former or retired Oil company workers, former and current oil company workers, indigenes of the host communities who ventured into oil bunkering were interviewed. However, the data about oil theft and its effects on the Niger Deltans, interviews, books, journals, magazines, news bulletin and internet webpage. The study was carried out to reconstruct and present the past activities of oil theft drawing leverage from the ideas of historical event research, which is vital because the past is intelligible and presents a light of the present reality. Thus, for oil theft to be tackled, government must sit up and fight this menace to the core. The relevant information collected were critically examined which were of great importance in this study especially from chapter 1-3 and also critical in the discussion of findings in the next chapter. Indeed, the combined evidence erroneously helped to vindicate and authenticate historical information as it balances the weavers of one source against the other source.

Data Presentation and Analysis

This chapter focused on the presentation and analysis of data generated from the field work. Content analysis of selected newspaper and quantitative analysis of 400 copies of questionnaire were administered and 350 were properly filled and returned.

4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

The data generated from the responses received are presented in the tables below. This chapter was divided into two parts i.e the demographic and psychographic data sections.

Table 4.1.1 Age Distribution

Age range	Frequency	Percentage
18-25	150	43
26-45	200	57
Total	350	100

The table above shows that 200 respondents representing 57% were between the ages of 34-35 while 150 respondents representing 43% were aged between 18 and 25. This means that the respondents are mature people in the society.

Table 4.1.2: Distribution of Respondents by Religion

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Christian	340	97
Muslim	10	3
Total	350	100

The table above reveals that 340 respondents representing 97% were Christians while 10 respondents representing 3% were Muslims. This means that the respondents are more of the Christians.

Table 4.1.3: Educational Qualification of Respondents

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
FSLC	20	6
SSCE	170	49
BSc/HND	70	20
Post Graduate	90	26
Total	350	100

The above table indicates that most of the respondents are SSCE holders that rate 170 representing 49%. While the least respondents are 20 representing 6%. B.Sc /HND rate 70 representing 20% of the respondents. While Post Graduate is 90 representing 26%. This in essence shows that majority of the respondents are SSCE holders.

4.2 Analysis of Research Items

Research Item 1: What is the depth of the coverage of oil theft in the Niger Delta region

Table 4.4 The depth of the coverage of oil theft in the Niger Delta region

No of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
110	1000	31
90	2000	25
80	2,500	23
70	3,500	20

350		100
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The above table shows that 110 representing 31% said the depth of coverage of oil theft in Niger Delta is 1000 ft among other options in the table.

Research item 2: What is the frequency of the coverage of oil theft in the Niger Delta

Table 4.5:

No of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
120	Once a year	34
100	Twice a year	29
100	Thrice a year	29
30	None	9
350	Seven times	100

From the above interpretation, it is obvious that coverage of oil theft is once a year. This is very poor considering the economic situation in our country. And this is in support of the view of Mba (2019) on the causes and the terrain of oil spillage in the Niger Delta.

Research item 3: What is the placement of the oil coverage in the Niger Delta

Table 4.6

No of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
80	Top left	23
120	Centre	34
110	Bottom left	31
40	Top right	11
350	Seven times	100

The discussion above depicts the position of the oil theft headline, which majority carries centre among others having the frequency of 120 representing 34%.

Table 4.7 The extent of discursive role of the media in the coverage of oil theft in the Niger Delta region

Oil theft	Frequency	Percentage
Great extent	100	29
Greater extent	90	26
Low extent	50	14
Very low extent	60	17
Total	350	100

The above shows extent of discursive role of the media in the coverage of oil theft is to a great extent having 100 representing 29% as the highest rank greater extent 90 representing 26% of the respondents, low extent 50 representing 14% and very low extent 60 representing 17% of the respondents.

4.2.1 Research Item 2: What are the knowledge, attitude and practice of individuals involved in oil theft in the Niger Delta region.

Processes	Frequency	Percentage
Practical knowledge	20	6
Theoretical knowledge	70	20
Applied knowledge	90	26
All of the above	170	49
Total	350	100

The above shows that all the above processes are used in the coverage of oil theft as 170 representing 49% affirmed in which practical knowledge rates 20 representing 6%, theoretical knowledge rates 70 representing 20%, applied knowledge rated 90 representing 26% of the respondents.

4.2.2 Research Item 3: To what extent is the rate of oil coverage from (2012-2022)

Table 4.8

Health hazard and risk	Frequency	Percentage
Great extent	100	29
Greater extent	90	26
Low extent	50	14
Very low extent	60	17
Total	350	100

The above shows that the extent of oil theft coverage from 2001-2015 is to a great extent. Greater extent 90 representing 26%, low extent 50 representing 14% and very low extent 60 representing 17% of the respondents.

4.2.3. Research Item 4: Do you believe that the economic benefits of these activities outweigh the potential health and environmental risks?

Table 4.9 Economic benefits of these activities outweigh the potential health and environmental risks

Causes	Frequency	Percentage
No	160	43
Yes	140	57
Total	350	100

The above table is clear that there are economic benefits of these activities outweigh the potential health and environmental risks as No carries the highest frequency of 160 representing 43. 160 which is the majority of the respondents believe that the economic benefits of the activities do not outweighed the potential and environmental health hazards.

4.2.3. Research Item 5: Are you satisfied with your current income level

Table 4.10 Satisfaction with your current income level

Causes	Frequency	Percentage
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No	200	57
Yes	150	43
Total	350	100

The table above indicates that many of the operators of the oil theft are not happy with their current income level and that is why they engage in this illegal activities in other to boost their income.

4.2.4. Research Item 6: How would you compare the income in oil theft and refining to other local jobs available

Table 4.11 Comparison of artisanal local oil to other local jobs

Causes	Frequency	Percentage
Much higher	130	37
Slightly higher	120	34
Comparable	50	14
Slightly lower	30	9
Much lower	20	6
Total	350	100

From the above table, it is clear that there is a great chance in the comparison of the income from oil theft to other local jobs available. As the table indicates that much higher occupies the frequency of 130 representing 37% of the respondents, slightly higher assumes the chance of 120 people representing 34% of the respondents, comparable, 50 representing 14% of the respondents, slightly higher, 30 representing 9% of the respondents and much lower indicates 20 representing 6% of the respondents. The table therefore, means that the income gotten from oil theft and refining operation is much higher than other local jobs available.

Discussion of Findings

In this study, 400 copies of questionnaire were administered to some residents of Niger Delta region, 350 were filled and returned.

In this study, questionnaire was administered to males and equally females. This means that the study comprised of both males and females.

There are various categories of people ranging from students to working class.

On the research item 1 what is the discursive role of the media in the coverage of oil theft in the Niger Delta region.

On the research Item 2. What is the semantic role of the media in the coverage of oil theft?

On the research Item 3 the knowledge, attitude and practice of individuals involved in oil theft and refining regarding health and safety measures in Niger Delta region regarding health and safety measures in Niger Delta region. All of the above ranked the highest of 170 representing 49 of the respondents. The result shows that all the processes are involved in oil theft and refining in Niger Delta region. This is in agreement with the view of Gaskia, (2013) that talked on hot tapping and cold tapping processes the illegal oil refiners use in oil bunkering and vandalisation.

On the research Item 3 which is if there is any oil refining in Niger Delta region. Yes ranked the highest 250 (83%). The above which ranked the highest among others.

On the research question 4 which is on Economic benefits of these activities outweigh the potential health and environmental risks. No which ranked 160 representing 43% affirmed so.

The research question 5 asks on the current satisfaction level, No assumed the most frequency of 200 representing 57% of the respondents.

On the research question 6, comparison of the income level, much higher ranked the highest among others with the higher response of 130 representing 37% of the respondents.

On the research question 7, the view of oil theft and refining by members of the community, harmful

activity that should be stopped took 140 representing 40% of the respondents.

Research question 8 asks if they will be able to switch over when government provides a good job.

Unsure took the highest response of 120 representing 34% of the respondents.

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

Summary

This study was conducted to seek evidence of truth or falsity on the discourse and semantics of the coverage of oil theft in the Niger Delta of Nigeria.

Several literatures that were relevant to the subject matter were reviewed. The study purpose were: Specifically, it seeks the find out the discursive role of the media in the coverage of oil theft in the Niger Delta region.

ascertain the semantic role of the media in the coverage of the oil theft in the Niger Delta region, investigate the effects of coverage on the oil theft in the Niger Delta, know how to curtail the rate of oil theft in the Niger Delta.

Conclusion

This study has been able to capture the Oil theft in Nigeria has had sever environmental and human consequences for the indigenous people who inhabit the area surrounding oil extractions. The social and environmental cost of oil production has been extensive. They include destruction of wildlife and biodiversity, loss of fertile soil. Theft of air and drinking water, degradation of farmland and damage to aquatic ecosystem, all of which have caused serious health problems for the inhabitants of the area surrounding oil production.

Environmentalists and people generally give blame to the oil companies but the Federal Government provides the laws, legislations and license, which the oil companies must adhere too. The Federal Government has to take steps, which they have started with NOSDRA, NDDC, UNEP, UN SPDC and NGOs. Improvement have begun in terms of achieving sustainable development in the Niger Delta, the government should continue to allocate more revenue into the Niger Delta for steps toward finding a permanent and lasting solution.

There is great extent of the prevalence of the discourse and semantics of the coverage of oil theft in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

All forms of knowledge, whether practical, applied, theoretical etc knowledge are involved in oil theft regarding health and safety measures in Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

There is the presence of oil theft and refining in Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

The income level is much higher than any other local job available to the people of Niger Delta State.

The peoples view is that the illegal activity should be put to a stop majorly because of its harmfulness to the environment and to the individuals concerned.

The activity of the oil theft and refining has made the operators not to be sure if they will switch to government job when available.

Recommendations

The findings of this study call for certain recommendations and these are as follows.

1. There should be more efforts on the discursive role of the media in the coverage of oil theft in the Niger Delta region.
2. Government should look into the oil refiners who have vast knowledge and stop them to use such for this illegal activity; rather engage on something legal and meaningful
3. Government should abolish indigenous artisanal oil refining in the Niger Delta region.
4. Government should create more employment opportunities in other to curtail this harmful activity.
5. Government should make sure the enacted policies are in existence to curtail the rapid increase of oil theft in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

5.4 Suggestions for further Research

The findings, conclusions and recommendations above suggest certain area for further research:

1. The Media Coverage of the Effects of Health Hazards and Oil Refining in Bayelsa State
2. The discourse on the Oil Spill and Environmental Degradation in Warri South Local Government Area

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