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## **The Impact of Militancy and Cult Groups' Activities on Runde Community Development in Niger Delta Region of Nigeria**

**Wilson, Goddey, Ph.D.**

Department of Political Science

Ignatius Ajuru University of Education

Rumuorlumini, Port Harcourt.

E-mail: [wilson.goddey@yahoo.com](mailto:wilson.goddey@yahoo.com)

### **Abstract**

Our study examined the activities of militants and cult groups in Runde community, and its impact on Runde community development. The study was carried out in Runde community of Ikwerre ethnic nationality in Rivers State, Nigeria within the period of 2000-2016. Cult groups, militancy and community development were conceptualised in the study. Both primary and secondary data were used to achieve the objectives of the study. The study adopted expectancy theory as its theoretical framework of analysis, emphasizing that the cult groups and militants were motivated in their activities due to the expected rewards from their actions. The findings showed that Runde as one of the communities in the Niger Delta region had intensive militants' and cult groups activities, and their activities had significant impact on Runde community development.

**Key Words:** Community development, expectancy, militancy, cult group, activities

### **Introduction**

The rising wave of cult groups and militant activities in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria has attracted and will continue to attract both local and international attention. At the initial time, the militants were classified as aggrieved youths in the region, who felt that despite the huge oil resources and financial revenue derived from

the Niger Delta region, the Niger Delta region is faced with severe neglect, deprivation and high indices of poverty even when the region accounts for 100% oil and gas revenue, and over 80% of Nigeria's foreign earning. Many scholars including Wilson (2014:72) argue that the development challenges faced by the Niger Delta region was as a result of the failure of Nigerian state to re-invest the proceed from the region in the development of the region. This neglect by the state constant agitation for resource control by the people of the region. The agitation took different dimension at different times. According to Ekanamah (2010) "the agitation for resource control graduated from peaceful demonstration to violent approach, climaxing to youth violence, pipeline vandalism and outright militancy". Wilson (2012:56) added that the aggrieved youths formed different ethnic militia groups – Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), Niger Delta People Volunteers Force (NDPVF), Icelanders, Niger Delta Vigilantes (NDV), and many others as a platform for the struggle and constant attacks on Nigerian State, oil installations and workers, and Nigerian elites. With the constant attacks, most oil multinationals operating in the region had to relocate their operational base. Today, the Niger Delta militancy has taken another approach and changed its operational focus, as the militants don't only attack oil installations and kidnap oil workers in the region, but has introduced several cult groups and recruited many youths from different communities including Rundele community into the cult activities. These cult members are trained by the militants as foot soldiers for violence and reconnaissance on activities of their targets in the communities. After several successful operations, the agile members of the cult groups are usually regrouped and inducted into the militant group to help intensify their operations in the various communities. All these have resulted in increased kidnap rate, violence, perennial communal crisis, and constant clash of cult groups in Rundele and other Niger Delta communities.

Before the advent of militancy and cult group activities in Rundele community, the community has been safe haven for indigenes and residents, hence, the attraction of several government projects for community development in the area. On their part, Rundele people initiated some community development programmes and participated in the implementation process to enhance effective community development. Unfortunately, with the emergence of militancy in Rundele community and other neighbouring communities in the region which gave rise to the numerous cult groups. These cult groups in collaboration with the militants create several challenges to Rundele people and their community development effort. The cult groups facilitated the kidnapping of Rundele people by the militants, induced violence and increased insecurity in the community, destroyed the available community development facilities, forced the people to flee to other communities for safety, and deprived the Rundele people access to effective community development. Consequent upon the

above, it is the interest of the study to identify the activities of the cult groups and militants, and examine their impacts on Runde community development.

### **Scope of the Study**

The study focused on the activities of cult groups and militants in Runde community, and its impacts on the community's development. The study uses Runde community made up of five villages in Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria as a case study in the Niger Delta, and the findings will be used to generalise in the entire Niger Delta communities on issues of cult groups, militancy and community development. The study explored literature on issues of cult activities, militancy and community development. The time frame for the study is 2000-2016.

#### **Area of the Study: A Brief Background on Runde Community.**

Runde is one of the clans with five villages namely Agba, Egamini, Omofa, Mgbuelia, and Mgbuola in Ikwerre ethnic nationality of Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria.

**Geographically**, Runde community is located within the South-East Senatorial district of the state. Runde shares boundaries at the north with Uvu-Ahu and Elele-Alimini communities of the same local government area, at the south with Degema community in Degema Local Government Area and Otari community in Abua/Odual Local Government Area of the state, at the West with Rumuekpe community in the same local government area and Ogbele community in Ahoada East Local Government Area, and at the east with Odegu community in the same local government area. However, the River Sambrayo clearly demarcates the Runde community with other communities at the west and south except Rumuekpe community.

**Socio-culturally**, Runde people speak Ikwerre language as their traditional language and English as second language. The people are rich in cultural activities. The ekhe day is placed sacred, as no farmer goes to the farm except to harvest crops and fishing. The urie, ahu and ngwo days are farming days, with the urie specifically designated as the farming day for the head of the family. The people have several traditional dances, which they display during festive periods and cultural ceremonies such as marriage, burial, coronation etc. As farmers, Runde people celebrate their new yam festival in August of every year.

**Economically**, Runde as a community within the Niger Delta region, has a large deposit of farm land, with the combination of forest and swamp giving opportunity to fishing, farming, herbalism and trading in the area, as the River Sambrayo gives Runde community access to other coastal and riverine communities in the Niger Delta region for possible economic activities. The people are predominantly fishermen, farmers and traders. However, with the advent of western

education and the quest for white man job, today a good number of Rundeles are highly placed in either civil service jobs or in mega private investments as business men and women. This scenario has prompted the emergence of elites' groups in Rundeles, with the desire for the control of political and administrative structure of the state.

**Politically**, Rundeles is a community where the families of various villages form units of political and social organisations for political and administrative convenience. As tradition demands, the oldest man in the family and village heads the family and the village respectively or consecutively where the oldest man in the family is also the oldest man in the village. The family or village head in consultation with other members of the family or village settles dispute among members of the family or the village. Indeed, Rundeles people are conscious of the vital role of politics in governance, hence, the establishment of such organs and structures as Office of the Paramount Ruler of Rundeles as the administrative head of Rundeles, Oha Rundeles as the traditional Prime Minister, Council of Village Heads, Council of Chiefs, Council of family heads, Youth Forum, Women Association etc for effective political and administrative convenience. Each of the organs is charged with a specific responsibility aimed at ensuring political stability and peaceful coexistence of the people. These traditional and political arrangements had previously placed Rundeles as a peaceful clan in Ikwerre ethnic nationality; however, with the advent of militancy and cult groups in the Niger Delta, Rundeles is now faced with the challenges of the militants and cult activities, with its attendant implications on the people and the community development.

### Conceptual Issues

#### 1. Community Development

Community development as a concept has attracted several scholarly arguments and definitions. Historically, community development and its practice have its root in the social reform movement in Britain and North America in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. The community development principles were found useful and applied as the third world development strategy upon the independence of the third world states. Community development is better understood within the context of separately explaining the component words – community, and - development. This study sees community as a group of people with a shared identity living in a particular geographical area, such as Rundeles. Christenson and Robinson (1989) see development as the process that increases choice. It implies new options, diversifications, thinking about apparent issues differently and anticipating change. It means change and improvement from the existing status or stage of being. Considering the above, some scholars see community development as a process; others see it as a group activity. To Flora and Flora (1993), community development is an interaction between people and

joint action, rather than individual activity- what some sociologists will call “collective agency”.

Similarly, Christenson and Robinson (1989) defined community development as a group of people reaching a decision to initiate a social action process to change their economic, social, cultural and environmental situation. The above scholars see community development from the perspective of activities carried out by a group of people leaving in a particular geographical area with a common basic aim of initiating and implementing those activities that will improve their life style in the area. Flora & Flora (1993) corroborates the above view, as they argue that community development can only occur when the people in a given community come together and work cooperatively to improve their collective well-being in the community. In another perspective, Biggs (1999) sees community development as a process where people are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of the communities and the communities are integrated into the life of the nation enabling them to contribute fully to national progress.

This study tends to adopt the views of the above scholars on community development. In Runde, community development is seen both as an activity and as a process. As an activity, Runde people through the instrumentality of the community administrative structure organise themselves together, initiate programmes and implement same jointly for their general well-being. In essence, there is a communal dimension in the developmental efforts of the people. As a process, community development in Runde community entails the continuous ability of Runde people to consistently come together to formulate programmes and implement same in collaboration with the government and/or other agencies to ensure improved economic, social, political and cultural conditions of the community and the people therein. Obviously, there are indices of community development in Runde, and it is the desire of people to improve on existing capacity as they continue to partner with government and other agencies for their well-being. However, the emergence of militancy and cult group activities in the entire Niger Delta region at large and Runde community in particular, has affected these community development efforts in Runde.

## 2. Cult Groups and Militancy

Historically, cult as a word was first used in 17th century as a French word – **culte**, and has its origin from Latin word – **cultus**, meaning – worship, and was popularised in 1930s when the US Holiness Movement used it in medical literature in America and found it relevant in explaining “faith healing”, which has to do with religious belief in sociological study. (Taylor, 1930). In 1932, an American sociologist, Howard P. Becker introduced cult as a sociological study in an attempt to spread the Ernst Troeltsch’s church –sect typology. Ernst Troeltsch, a German theologian aimed had distinguished between the three types of religions namely, the church, the sectarian,

and the mystical. Becker classified the church and sectorial into four categories as “ecclesia”, “denomination”, “sect”, and “cult”. This prompted Campell (1998) to see Becker’s view on cult as a small religion lacking in organisation and emphasising the private nature of personal beliefs. To Richardson (1993), and Stark and Bainbridge (1987:124), cult is a deviant religious group that derive its inspiration from outside of the predominant religious culture, and its activities leads to high degree of tension between the group and the mainstream culture surrounding the cult. This makes some scholars including Dawson (2006) to see cult activities as inimical to society’s development, as its conflict of interest is capable of generating violence and destruction of community development programmes.

The sociologists and psychologists have identified different types of cult groups in the society as **Doomsday cults, Political cults, and Destructive cults**. The type of cult group is identified and determined based on its activities.

For the purpose of this study, we adopted destructive cult group based on its activities in Rundele community in particular and Niger Delta region at large. Destructive cult group is a type of cult group characterised with high violence activities, sometimes against themselves, and on the other hand against the community and its people. Langone (1999) sees destructive cult group as a type of cult group that is highly manipulative, and exploitative, and sometimes carry out physical and/or psychological damage on both members and non-members of their cult group. Osaghae, Ikelegbe, Olarinmoye, & Okhonmina (2008) states that destructive cult groups usually provide security and economic support for themselves, and subscribe to oath of allegiance and secrecy, and rely mostly on violence to achieve their aim in the society. They secret of their membership, operations, and initiation rites are known only to themselves. The scholars identified Icelanders, Greenlanders, KKK, Germans, Dey Gbam, Dey Well, Mafia Lords, Vulture, among others as some of the destructive cult group in the entire Niger Delta region, including Rundele community. These cult groups carry out violent activities in Rundele community such as sexual and human right abuses, killing of innocent people, kidnapping of the Rundele and non Rundele elites, generating intra and inter communal crisis, serving as political thugs to politicians in the area. The membership of the cult group is predominantly youths, and they continue to recruit their peers and contemporaries in Rundele and its environs.

Overtime, the ethnic struggle and quest for socio-economic development of the region provided the enabling environment for the formation of the ethnic militias in the region, with the principal objective of struggling for resource control, economic freedom, political recognition and environmental development by both the oil multinationals and the government. These ethnic militias include, but not limited to Niger Delta People Volunteer Force (NDPVF), Egbesu Boys of Africa, Mobutu Boys, and Niger Delta Freedom Fighter (NDFF), and Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND). These ethnic militias which carry out their struggle through

demonstrations and constant agitations, and have attracted both local and international attentions, however, have recently changed in their mode of operation, transforming into various militant groups, terrorising the region and her people. Today, both the cult groups and the militants operate side by side in the region; the militants operate as the higher and larger block, while the cult groups serves as their subsidiary and foot soldiers at various communities including Rundele. According to Osaghae, Ikelegbe, Olarinmoye, & Okhonmina (2008) militancy is “a combative and aggressive activism or engagement in struggle for identified causes” In the Niger Delta region, the identified cause is the perceived deprivation, environmental degradation, underdevelopment and impoverishment of the people. On the contrary, Wilson (2012:56) states that the militant groups in the region are no more struggling for environmental development and resource control, but resorted to constant attacks on Nigerian state, oil multinationals, and Nigerian elites for ransom. In a bid to achieve their intentions, with the heavy arms in their hands, they engage in kidnapping and all sorts of negative activities in the region, with its detriment effects on both the state and citizens. These militant groups are funded through the proceeds from illegal oil bunkering, ransom from kidnapped people, providing thugs and security services for politicians, and hiring out of their heavy and light arms. These proceeds are used in recruiting more youths and maintaining their pyramid leadership structure in the communities.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Expectancy Theory**

Expectancy theory was propounded by Victor Vroom of Yale School of Management, Yale University in 1964, arising from his study on the motivation behind decision making. The theory postulates that the behaviour of individual is as result of conscious choice among alternative choices, whose purpose is to maximise pleasure and minimise pain (Vroom & Deci, 1983). The theory sees behaviour as a choice, and suggests that motivation is the main basis for any choice of action or behaviour of individual based on the following factors:

- There is a positive correlation between efforts and performance
- Favourable performance will result in a desirable reward
- The reward will satisfy an important need
- The desire to satisfy the need is strong enough to make the effort worthwhile.

According to Oliver (1974, p. 248), expectancy theory emphasises that “an individual will behave or act in a certain way because they are motivated to select a specific behaviour over other behaviours due to what they expect the result of that selected behaviour will be”. The implication is that the expected choice of action is greatly determined by the level of motivation and reward attached to the action. The level of outcome of behaviour affects the future performance of the individuals. The more the

reward in an event, the more expected performance of the same or similar event, counting on the amount of expected reward.

Expectancy theory is more of an act of choice or choosing a more desired or rewarding action among all, and it explains the process individuals undergo in making such alternative choice of action or behaviour in the society. The theory has three basic variables or components as expectancy; valence; and instrumentality.

- *Expectancy* is viewed as the faith that individual effort will result in a reward of desired choice or goal. It means that effort leads to performance, so performance is determined by the effort applied. In summary, expectancy: effort  $\rightarrow$  performance (E  $\rightarrow$  P).
- *Valence*. Maslow (1954) states that it is the value an individual places on the rewards of an outcome, based on their needs, goals, values and sources of motivation. This is the value an individual attaches to a reward, which influences his performance. Valence: V(R) outcome  $\rightarrow$  reward.
- *Instrumentality*: Is the belief that if you perform well, then a valid outcome awaits you. This implies the higher the performance, the higher the rewards. Instrumentality: performance  $\rightarrow$  outcome (P  $\rightarrow$  O).

The application of expectancy theory in this study is based on the activities of the militants and cult groups in line with their motivational forces, which spurs them to act in Rundele community. The militants and cult groups engage in their activities in the community based on their anticipated rewards, and the belief that the more operations they carry out in the community, the more reward they will achieve.

The three components of expectancy theory – Expectancy, Valence, and Instrumentality influence the activities of the militants and cult groups, and their quest for more operations as to earn more reward and satisfy their desire to the detriment of the community and its people. Such rewards include economic achievements, recognition in the community, and elevation or affiliation to higher body within their operations. They carry out their activities based on the anticipated expectations for economic and social rewards attached to such activities. They kidnap for ransom, kill people when they are paid to do so, disrupt community programmes and projects in anticipation for negotiation for financial payment, destroy oil and gas installations with the hope of either selling the pipes or cajoling the oil company to pay them a ransom. All these activities are aimed at benefitting the militants and cult groups, but destroying the Rundele community development efforts.

### Methodology

This study uses primary and secondary data, and analyzes same to achieve the objective of the study. The primary data is generated from observations of activities of the cult

groups and militants in the area within the period under review. The secondary data was generated from outstanding literature on the subject matter, such as journals, newspaper and bulletin, and community development reports.

### **The Study Findings and Discussion**

#### **The Effects of Militancy and Cult Groups' Activities on Runde Community Development**

##### **1. Kidnapping and Payment of Ransom:**

The study noted that before the advent of militancy and cult groups' activities in Runde community, Runde people have been peaceful and the community has been a safe haven for both Runde people and residents. However, Runde is now a flash point for militancy and security threat in the state. The rate of kidnapping for ransom is at the increase. In May, 2015 two staff of the University Demonstration Secondary School (UDSS), Ndele (Runde) were Kidnapped and an undisclosed amount paid as ransom to the kidnapers before they were released. In June, 2015, the Principal of Community Secondary School, Ndele was kidnapped and ransom paid. On 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2015 four staff of Runde High School, Agba-Ndele were abducted in a commando style in Agba- Ndele during school hours. Dikewoha (2015) identified the staff as Christie Mbadiwe and Martha as teachers, Mr Joseph Wofurum as a labourer, and Duru Obinna Chrizitere as a Youth Corps member. The abductors demanded twenty-five million naira only (N25, 000,000:00) and after several negotiations the ransom was reduced to Six million naira only (N6,000,000:00). On 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2016, four prominent sons and daughters of Runde were kidnapped at Agba Ndele waterside, and Mr Progress Simon Wachuku was killed in the process. The victims were later released after payment of undisclosed ransom to the militants. This is to mention but a few. The implications of the kidnapping is enormous on Runde community, as the people waste huge resources as ransom to the kidnapers, and live in constant fear of being the next victim. These resources would have been used for the development of the people and community.

##### **2. Increase in Death Rate in Rudele Community**

The activities of the cult groups and militants in Runde community have increased the death rate in the community. In June, 2015, one Mr Ngerim Ezike was killed in the night in an attempt to resist kidnapping by the militants at Agba –Ndele. In March 2016 an innocent young boy was killed at Egamini-Ndele by cultists during a rival cult group clash. On 30th April, 2016, one Mr Progress Simon Wachuku (an undergraduate at Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt) was murdered by the militants at Agba waterside in an attempt to resist been kidnapped. Today, many Runde people are hypertensive arising from the challenges they encounter in the hands of the militants. Many who cannot manage their health challenges also die arising

from the militants' attack. On the other hand, Rundele people who are cultists and militants also die in a gun battle with either the state security operatives or their rival cult groups. Our study noted that some Rundele cultists and militants who were hired as mercenaries were killed in the recent communal clash at Ibaa, Emohua, Odegu and Rumuekpe communities. This has resulted in loss of manpower in Rundele.

### **3. Increase in Political Violence in Rundele**

Politicians hire the services of the cult groups and militants to provide security for their political party activities in Rundele community. While they are in this "security service" of the political party, they clash with any rival cult group hired by political opponents in the community. This clash results in disruption of political activities, and climax in political violence leading to death of people and deprivation of the voters from participation in the electoral process. In the 2015 general elections and March 19<sup>th</sup> re-run elections in Rundele, the militants and cult groups disrupted the electoral activities, leading to the cancellation of the election results and inconclusive elections in some polling units in Rundele. However, the elections will be rescheduled for later dates. The political violence affects the political development of the community.

### **4. Ban on Youth Activities**

Our study identified that bulk of the cult groups and militants are youths, who use the plat form of the youth forum to meet and carry out their activities. They use youth forum meetings as opportunity to initiate the younger ones into the cult groups, thereby increasing their number, and plan attack and reprisal attacks in the community. Sequel to the above, the Rundele Council of Chiefs and elders in collaboration with the government resolved to ban youth activities in the five villages. This ban has led to deprivation of the entire youth the opportunity to meet and discuss their welfare and community development issues in Rundele. It has also led to loss of youth leadership in the community, and youth politics in Rundele.

### **5. Disruption of Socio-Cultural and Economic Activities in Rundele**

Incessant cult and militant activities have warranted the Rundele Council of Chiefs and Elders to ban some socio-cultural practices in the community. There is a ban on wake-keep as a burial rite to late person (irrespective of the status), no cultural dance display in the night, no more youth gathering for cultural activities etc. The ban is to avoid possible attack by the cultists and militants, and the implication is that all these cultural activities have been stopped. The constant kidnapping, robbery and violence in Rundele community have also affected the economic activities in the area. In 2014 to 2016, many crop farmers deserted their farms for fear of being kidnapped, casualty of stray bullet, killed by the cult boys or attacked by unknown people. This resulted in shortage of farm products such as yam, garry, coco-yam, etc. in Rundele,

and sudden hike in prices of food items in the area. The fishermen were not excluded from this challenge, as they were regularly robbed, kidnapped or attacked by the militants, thereby forcing them to keep away from fishing activities, and resulting to shortage of fish supply and increase in the price of fish. Even the markets in the area are no longer functioning effectively. The Ahia-Gbo (market) at Agba-Ndele waterside, one of the biggest market in the community, can no longer function due to the activities of the militants (sea pirates), who either kidnap or rob the marketers from Abonnema, Degema, Abua, Ogbelle and other parts of Ijaw communities. The Ahia-Chuku (market) at Mgbuola, Ahia-Mgbelia (market) at Mgbelia and Ahia-Omofo (market) at Omofo are seriously affected, as the marketers are regularly robbed by the militants along East-West road on market days. The fear of being kidnapped, robbed or killed in the process have scared the marketers from coming to buy and sell in Rundele markets, thereby paralyzing economic activities and increasing hardship in Rundele.

#### **6. Loss of Properties and Cultural Value in Rundele**

In addition to loss of life to militancy and cult activities, Rundele people loss their properties to the activities of cult groups and militants in the community. On 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2016, upon the killing of Mr Progress Simon Wachuku by the militants at Agba-Ndele waterside and the recovery of the corpse by the youths, another aggrieved cult group (DE-GBAM) made up of Rundele youths hijacked the corpse and carried the corpse around the community and destroyed the houses of all the Chiefs and Oha (paramount ruler) in Agba-Ndele. In the process, there was reprisal attack by another cult group (DE-WELL) and several houses and other properties were lost. While these attacks were going on, the Chiefs and many people ran away from Agba-Ndele community for fear of being killed. Ironically, despite all these damages, no arrest or prosecution was made till date in the community. In Agba, Mgbuola and Mgbelia villages of Rundele, the cult groups are terrorising people on daily bases, thereby making the people to live in constant fear. With the heavy arms in their possession, they rob people in the community on regular bases. Our study observed that the activities of the militants and cult groups have generated negative cultural practice and belief system in Rundele, which implies that the cult groups under the pretence of aggrieved youths can wake up any time and destroy properties, chase people away from the community, and possess what does not belong to them. This new belief system has affected negatively the cultural value and orientation of the youths towards community security and development in Rundele.

#### **7. Increase in Heavy and Small Arms in Rundele**

Our study noted that there is high presence of heavy and small arms in Rundele villages. Due to the activities of militants and cult group in Rundele, there are heavy and small arms in the community. Some of the militants and cult groups are Rundele indigenes, who also reside in Rundele and operate in Rundele. To remain in the

business and maintain their status, they acquire more arms to enable them carry out their operations. These same arms are kept in Rundele, although at unknown locations. The effect is that the presence of these arms aids the militants and cult groups to quickly carry out their operations and reprisal attacks in Rundele and its environs leading to the loss of life and properties in the communities.

#### **8. Mass Movement of Rundele People and Residents out of Rundele**

The constant kidnapping, robbery and killing in Rundele community, occasioned by the militants and cult groups have forced people out of Rundele community to other communities in search of security. A good number of Rundele people, particularly those working or doing business outside Rundele no longer come home. The strangers residing in Rundele are also leaving in their numbers. This has affected both economic and socio-political activities of the community, as Rundele people now hardly come home to participate in their family and community meetings or to discuss their development issues.

#### **9. Closure of Schools and Government Facilities in Rundele**

Arising from the activities of militants and cultists in Rundele High School, Agba-Ndele and Community Secondary School, Egamini-Omofo, these schools were closed for academic activities for some period in 2015, leading to the loss of academic term to militant activities. The Chairman of Parent Teachers Association (P.T.A), University Demonstration Secondary School, Ndele, Chief Brantley Reuben Osuamkpe alongside with other parents, threatened to withdraw their children and eventually close the school due to incessant kidnapping in Rundele. The staff of the Comprehensive Health Centre, Ndele closed down the health centre in 2015 due to the fear of possible attack and kidnapping. This became a challenge to Rundele people and residents, as their people were deprived of access to schools and quality health care. It also affected the image of Rundele community, as many see Rundele community as the den of robbers and militants. This poor image generated by the militants could affect future government intension to establish a community development project in the area for the fear of possible attack on the project staff and vandalisation of the project.

#### **Recommendations**

Upon the above findings of the study, we make the following recommendation as measures to address the operations of the militants and cult groups in Rundele and enhance Rundele community development in the state.

- The state should introduce community security in Rundele, and engage the youths as the community vigilantes under the supervision of the state security agents. This will place the youths under the state security watch and control, as the engaged youths will provide security and information in the community on security issues where necessary.

- Government should intensify security patrol in Rundele waterways and roads. This will reduce the activities of the sea pirates and militants in the community.
- Government should employ necessary legal frame work to prosecute the identified militants and cultists in the area, to discourage others from such activities.
- Government should engage the violent youths in negotiation for peace and device the necessary means of mopping up the arms in the community. This approach will reduce the available arms used for attack and reprisal attacks in the community.
- Government should engage repented youths in meaningful ventures to earn a living in the community. This will reduce idleness among the youths and enhance both human and community development.
- Rundele community leaders should report politicians who use the cult groups for security job during political activities to state security agents. This will discourage politicians from using the cultists to ferment political violence and communal crisis in the community.
- Community elders and state government should lift the ban on the youth activities in Rundele, and institute a re-orientation programme for the youths. This will enable the elders and government to directly monitor the youth activities and mobilise them as agents of change for community peace and development.

Finally, it is our belief that when the above measures are adequately applied, it will reduce the cult groups and militants' activities in Rundele, and enhance Rundele community development.

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