



## ADVANCING HOLISTIC HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT: A PERSPECTIVE ON THE PRESIDENTIAL AMNESTY PROGRAMME

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**ABSTRACT:** *The Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP) was a policy thrust to tackle the intractable agitations and youth restiveness in the Niger Delta region due to utter neglect of the development of the region despite the enormous contributions to the national treasury from its rich-oil deposits and gas resources. Accordingly, this study uncovers human capital development in the Niger Delta states from the lens of the PAP. The study applied a quantitative research strategy with a structured questionnaire. A sample of 574 respondents was drawn through a multi-stage sampling design from 13,254 chiefs, community leaders, youths and the staff of the amnesty office, which served as the target population of the study. From the primary and secondary data collected and analysed, the findings demonstrated that the Presidential Amnesty Programme had a positive significant effect on vocational skills acquisition, there was a positive relationship between PAP and university educational advancement, and there was a positive relationship between budgetary provision and human capital development among others. We concluded that the PAP has contributed to the human capital development of youths in the region. We recommended inter alia that the amnesty programme of the federal government of Nigeria should be committed to exposing ex-militants to vocational skill acquisition scheme to ensure self-reliance, and also should improve on the university educational advancement for ex-militants to acquire professional certification in the Niger Delta States.*

**KEYWORDS:** Presidential Amnesty Programme, Human Capital Development, Ex-militants, Niger Delta.



## INTRODUCTION

There have been armed struggles and conflicts, a common phenomenon across the world. Asia, Africa and other continents of the world have witnessed a plethora of armed conflicts originating from dissenting interests and the need to control political power, self-determination and state resources (Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration [DDR], 2008; Knight, 2008). In specific terms, African countries like Liberia, Sudan, Rwanda, Uganda and many others have been war-ridden and war-torn zones, and the process of peace building eventually resulted in state pardon and peace agreements under the auspices of national governments(DDR, 2008; Buchowska, 2016).

In the case of Nigeria, the country's history is replete with agitations by people from the Niger Delta region, expressing fears of possible domination by majority ethnic groups in an independent Nigeria. They have also voiced their lack of socio-economic development from the huge oil and gas revenue generated from their region. The Niger Delta states in Nigeria have recorded an increase in violence and crisis in recent years. To address the challenges of utter neglect and ensure peace-building in the Niger Delta region, Ekelegbe and Umukoro (2016) asserted that the Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP) was introduced by former President, late Umaru Musa Yara'Adua on the 25 June, 2009 after the failure of federal government military approach to mitigate the incidence of conflicts, youth restiveness, kidnapping and vandalism of oil pipelines and facilities in the region.

The focus of the PAP was to grant amnesty to youths, calling on them to surrender their arms and ammunition to tow the path of peace in the Niger Delta region. The PAP consisted of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of youths in the region. For proper reintegration of youths, human capital investment became one of the key components of the initiative. Human capital is a fundamental key to economic and social wellbeing of organisations, regions, and nations (Mandal, 2018; Sehrewat & Giri, 2017). To the critical nature of human capital, organisations and nations make substantial investments in human capital to enhance their social and economic value and utility (Nkundabanyanga et al., 2014; Chen & Chang, 2013; Sehrewat et al., 2017).

From the arguments of Nkundabanyanga et al. (2014) and Sehrewat et al. (2017), human capital conveys several meanings with diverse perspectives. In the context of this study, human capital signifies the skills, knowledge, experience and abilities possessed by individuals in an entity and a nation. Undoubtedly, human capital development is the investment in individuals to enable them acquire skills, education, and experience to enhance their economic and social value. The federal government of Nigeria engaged in holistic human capital development by allocating funds through budgetary provisions, offering the youth conventional tertiary education and vocational education as the reintegration element of PAP in the region (Oyeleye, 2011).

The research paper is guided by the following research objectives: To examine effect of the amnesty programme on vocational skill acquisition of ex-militants in the Niger Delta; to ascertain the effect of the amnesty programme on educational advancement of ex-militants in the Niger Delta; to evaluate the effect of the budgetary provision of the amnesty programme on human capital development of ex-militants in the Niger Delta; and to determine the difference in the level of human capital development of ex-militants among the states in the Niger Delta.



## THEORY AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Human capital theory serves as the framework to understand the critical nature of individuals to organizations and nations in driving social and economic development. Sweetland (2024) viewed human capital as the skills, knowledge and abilities of individuals that signify the social and economic assets for productivity. In the context of the Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP), the reintegration of ex-militants requires improving on the skills, knowledge and ability to transform as valuable and productive assets of the region. Thus, the federal government invested in human capacity building through university education, vocational education and skills acquisition programmes to enhance their productivity, employability and entrepreneurial potentials of the ex-combatants and foster sustainable development of the Niger Delta region.

### **Amnesty Programme (PAP) and Vocational Skills Acquisition of Ex-militants in the Niger Delta**

One of the cardinal objectives of PAP was to integrate ex-militants into the society through the approach of vocational skills acquisition. Aigbedion (2018) asserted that PAP engaged in human capital development by exposing the ex-militants to vocational courses and helping them become economically self-reliant in the society. Amnesty is a state pardon granted to youths that were into violence and restiveness against oil multinationals and the federal government. The federal government does not punish them for the crimes committed against humanity and the violence perpetrated is considered as the agitation and “struggle” for their rights (Ikelegbe, 2010). Ajibola (2015) considers vocational skills acquisition as a strategy of the PAP to ensure peace in the region of the Niger Delta, and to succeed in the programme and realize its intended objectives, employment opportunities related to the skills acquired by the youths should be made readily available to absorb them. Vocational skills of PAP focus on scaffolding, deep-sea welding, pipeline welding, automobile repairs, and information communication technology (Agba et al., 2020). Therefore, we hypothesize that:

***Ha1:** The amnesty programme has a significant effect on vocational skill acquisition of ex-militants in the Niger Delta.*

### **Amnesty Programme and Tertiary Educational Advancement of Ex-militants in the Niger Delta**

One of the strands of the human capital development programme of PAP is the educational advancement of ex-militants through university education within and outside the country, Nigeria. Human capital development is approached from the lens of educational investment by enrolling youths in universities through scholarship. According to Adejumo, Asonga and Adejumo (2021), human capital development is a cumulative process, enrolling students through various institutions at different levels of education. The aim is to facilitate the process whereby people of the region acquire utility skills, capabilities and competencies and gain useful employment to fend for themselves and promote economic growth. The general notion is that most youths of the Niger Delta are deficient in employable skills and certification and remain unemployed, leading to violence and restiveness. For proper integration of youths into society, PAP becomes the vehicle for providing university education through scholarship schemes within and outside the shores of Nigeria (Tobor & Odubo, 2016a) and accordingly, educational advancement has been acknowledged as the key factor to mitigate youth violence in the region as well as integration into the society (Odubo & Ootobo, 2016b).



***Ha<sub>2</sub>:** The amnesty programme has a significant effect on educational advancement of ex-militants in the Niger Delta.*

### **Budgetary Provision for the Amnesty Programme and Human Capital Development of Ex-militants in the Niger Delta**

To fund the PAP and prosecute human capital development of youths in the Niger Delta, funds were allotted through national budgetary provision and options of public-private partnership were explored to sustain the ongoing efforts of the federal government to tackle the infrastructural and human developmental issues (Okoli & Ulo, 2024; Sabo, 2024). As reported by Ubhenin (2013), the sum of \$450,000 was set aside as budgetary allocation to fund the PAP in 2012 while Egonu et al. (2024) asserted that a supplementary budget of thirty-five billion naira (N35b) was earmarked for the PAP apart for N65b annual budgetary allocations. These budgetary allocations were committed into human capital development of youths in the Niger Delta region. The argument is that budgetary allocations and spending on ex-militants are no grounds for human capital development, which is merely an accounting cost but the economic future value with the expected learning outcomes are expedient.

***Ha<sub>3</sub>:** Budgetary provision for the amnesty programme has a significant effect on human capital development of ex-militants in the Niger Delta.*

### **Difference in the Levels of Human Capital Development of Ex-militants among the States in the Niger Delta**

There are eight (8) states that constitute the Niger Delta region with varying degrees in human capital development as reported by Dialoke et al. (2017): Edo, Delta, Bayelsa, Rivers, Ikwa Ibom, Imo and Ondo. From the perspective of PAP, Magill (2023) and Okocha et al. (2024) asserted that several factors were responsible for the setback in the successful implementation of the amnesty programme (Abdullahi, 2016). In accordance with Ikelegbe and Omukoro (2016) portend the failure in the implementation of the amnesty programme following the exclusion of ex-militants, victims and lack of peace agreement among other factors and we argue that the levels of human capital development also differ among the states in the region as PAP was far from inclusivity in drafting ex-agitators from the states for vocational education and university educational advancements of the youths.

***Ha<sub>4</sub>:** There is a significant difference in the level of human capital development of ex-militants among the states in the Niger Delta.*

### **Setbacks to the Implementation of the PAP in the Niger Delta**

Several factors have been considered to constrain the successful implementation of PAP and thus, it has not realized the intended objective of the intervention by the federal government. For Kayode and Koyede (2023), the setback for the implementation of the PAP is attributable to poor implementation, corruption and failure to address the root cause of the agitations in the region. To further buttress the argument, Ikelegbe and Umukoro (2016) contended that the exclusion approach to the implementation of PAP is the bane and pitfall to the intervention and peace building. Ikelegbe et al (2016) enumerated that the exclusion of some ex-militants, victims, reconstruction, absence of peace agreement, and a structural framework for peace building at different levels accounted for the failure of the PAP. While the intervention policy was implemented at various states in Niger Delta and all of the states have their peculiar



challenges, leading to variations in the level of successful implementation, some other factors may have more serious influence than others among the states. We hypothesize that:

**Has:** *There is a significant difference in the factors responsible for the setback in the implementation of the amnesty programme among the states in the Niger Delta.*

## RESEARCH STRATEGY AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

In this study, analytic descriptive survey design was employed. Nwankwo (2006) stated that an analytic descriptive survey concerns collecting data with a view to systematically describing and comparing the differences and relationship of the characteristics of a sample drawn from the population under investigation. Therefore, an analytic descriptive survey was adopted to draw a sample from communities in the six states in the South-South and the amnesty office in Nigeria. The aim was to elicit responses from chiefs, men, women and youths to identify, describe and assess the impact of the federal government amnesty programme on human capital development in Nigeria.

The target and accessible population of the study is 13,254 comprising first class chiefs, other categories of chiefs, men, women and youths from the communities in the South-South states and amnesty office in Nigeria. The source of the population was drawn from the Traditional Rulers Councils in each state of the region while the sample for the study was obtained through a pilot study by the application of sample size determination formula propounded by Cochran (1963), and the formula is presented thus:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 N pq}{N(e^2) + Z^2 pq}$$

where:

$n$  = Sample size

$N$  = Total population

$Z$  = Normal distribution

$p$  = Proportion of population likely to be included in the sample (50% is assumed)

$q$  = Proportion of population likely not be included in the sample ( 50% is assumed)

$e$  = Margin of error (4%)

$N$  = 5,982

$z$  = 1.96

$p$  = 0.5,  $q$  = 0.5,  $e$  = .04

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 13,254 (0.5) (.05)}{13,254 \times (.04)^2 \times (1.96)^2 (0.5) (0.5)}$$

$$n = \frac{3.8416 (13,254)(0.25)}{13,254 (0.0016) + 3.8416 (0.25)}$$



$$n = \frac{12729.142}{22.167}$$

$$n = 574.24$$

$$\mathbf{n = 574}$$

The study employed a multi-stage sampling design in the selection of the communities and the categories of respondents from the states in the South-South region in Nigeria. Simple random sampling procedure was employed in selecting senatorial districts, local governments were in turn selected and communities were finally selected. In view of the respondents, proportionate stratified sampling method was utilized in the selection of respondents from the various states and the stratum of chiefs, men, women and youths from the Niger Delta states.

### *Description of Measurement Instruments*

The survey instrument was developed in tandem with the information relevant to the research questions of the study. The instrument for data collection in this study is composed of Sections A and B. Section A elicited responses from the respondents about the state of origin and their status of being first-class chiefs, other classes of chiefs, men, women and youth. Section B on the other hand comprises measurement items of the amnesty programme, vocational skill acquisition, university educational advancement and the factors responsible for setbacks in implementing the amnesty programmes in South-South, Nigeria. The measurement instrument was designed by the research team and the subscales were developed and designed on a 5-point Likert Scale of Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) with their corresponding weights of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

### *Validity of Data Collection Instrument*

Content validity approach was employed. Five experts were involved in validating the instrument. Three academics were drawn from the Department of Business Administration in the Faculty of Management Sciences, Niger Delta University and two others from the Amnesty Office. The measurement instrument was corrected by rephrasing of wordings for clarity and coverage of variables in the study objectives. Following the development of the questionnaire, a pilot study was carried out to pretest the instrument to ensure that the items in the questionnaire were stated clearly and had the same meaning to all the respondents. A total of 34 copies of the questionnaire were administered to chiefs and ex-militants in Bayelsa State. Thirty copies of the questionnaire were returned and utilized for the reliability test. The respondents were informed that the questionnaire was a pilot for a larger study.

### *Reliability of Data Collection Instrument*

Reliability deals with evaluation of the dependability of a measurement instrument and to ascertain whether such measurement instrument provides consistent results under similar circumstances. In this study, reliability as the internal consistency test for the homogeneity of items in the entire measuring instrument was determined using Cronbach alpha. The reliability coefficient of the entire measurement instrument is .79. The reliability index of 79 % indicates a high level of internal consistency. The table below demonstrates reliability coefficient and the total number of measurement items.

**Table 3.8 Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
.793	21

*Source: Authors' Estimate from Pilot Study, 2017*

### ***Methods of Data Collection***

Data was collected employing a structured questionnaire. The structured questionnaires were administered to first-class chiefs, other chiefs, men, women and youths as beneficiaries in South South, Nigeria. A letter of introduction accompanied the questionnaire to explain the purpose of the study and assured the respondents of confidentiality and anonymity. Research assistants were enlisted in distributing and collecting the questionnaire from each state.

### ***Scoring of Data Collection Instrument***

The copies of the questionnaire from the field were scored with a view to providing numeric values for each variable of the study by assigning weights of 5 for Strongly Agree, 4 for Agree, 3 for Undecided, 2 for Disagree and 1 for Strongly Disagree to all the response items in the subscales of the instrument (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh & Sorensen, 2006; Nwankwo, 2006). Therefore, the minimum and maximum scores for the amnesty programme range from 8-40, vocational skill acquisition from 4-20, and university educational advancement from 5-25.

### ***Method of Data Analyses***

Data collected were presented in tables, analysed and interpreted using various statistics with respect to the impact of the amnesty programme on human capital development in South-South, Nigeria. Test statistics of regression analysis and one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were applied. Hypotheses One, Two and Three were tested by simple regression while Hypotheses four and five were tested with one way analysis of variance (ANOVA).



## DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This section is concerned with the presentation of inferential statistics such as t-test statistics, F-test statistics, beta coefficient, and probability values as to whether the various hypotheses presented have statistically significant effect and difference as the case may be or otherwise.

**Hypothesis One: Amnesty programme has a significant effect on vocational skill acquisition of ex-militants in the Niger Delta.**

**Table 1: Regression F-ratio and t-test on the effect of amnesty programme on vocational skill acquisition of ex-militants in the Niger Delta states**

Statistics	Independent Variable: Amnesty Programme(AP)	Dependent Variable: Vocational Skill Acquisition(VSA)
Unstandardized Co- efficient (B)	.060	18.54
Standardized Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	.103	-
Standard Error(S E)	.025	.546
t-statistic	2.37	33.96
Prob(t-statistic)	.018	.000
R	.103	
R-square	.011	
Adjusted R square	.009	
Std Error of Estimate	4.476	
F-statistic	5.61	
Prob (F-statistic)	.018	

**Source:** SPSS computed output, 2018; Chosen Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) = .05;  $VSA_i = b_0 + b_2AP_i$ ;  $VSA_i = 18.54 + .060AP$

Table 1 shows the inferential statistics to determine the effect of the amnesty programme on vocational skill acquisition of ex-militants in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The unstandardized and standardized coefficients of the amnesty programme as variables are .060 and .103 respectively. This suggests that the amnesty programme had a positive effect on the vocational skill acquisition of ex-militants in the Niger Delta. In other words, the amnesty programme had a 10% contribution to vocational skills acquisition. In view of the t-statistic, the result indicates that the Federal Government amnesty programme has a significant positive effect on the vocational skill acquisition of ex-militants in the Niger Delta states ( $t = 2.37$ ,  $p = .018 < .05$ ). Furthermore, the F-statistic also shows that there is a significant positive relationship between the amnesty programme and vocational skill acquisition of ex-militants in the Niger Delta ( $F_{(1,522)} = 5.61$ ,  $p = .018 < .05$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected since the t-test probability value is less than the chosen alpha ( $t = 2.37$ ,  $p = .018 < .05$ ).





**Hypothesis Two: Amnesty programme has a significant effect on educational advancement of ex-militants in the Niger Delta.**

**Table 2: Regression F-ratio and t-test on the effect of amnesty programme on educational advancement of ex-militants in the Niger Delta states**

Statistics	Independent Variable: Amnesty Programme(AP)	Dependent Variable: Educational Advancement(EA)
Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	.058	20.36
Standardized Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	.096	-
Standard Error(S E)	.026	.561
t-statistic	2.20	36.30
Prob(t-statistic)	.028	.000
R	.016	
R-square	.009	
Adjusted R square	.007	
Std Error of Estimate	4.60	
F-statistic	4.84	
Prob (F-statistic)	.028	

**Source:** SPSS computed output, 2018; Chosen Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) = .05;  $EA_i = b_0 + b_2AP_i$ ;  $EA_i = 20.36 + .058AP$

Table 2 demonstrates the inferential statistics to determine the effect of the amnesty programme on educational advancement of ex-militants in the Niger Delta region in Nigeria. The unstandardized and standardized coefficients of the independent variable are .058 and .096 respectively. This suggests that the amnesty programme had a positive effect on the educational advancement of ex-militants in the Niger Delta. In view of the t-statistic, the result indicates that the Federal Government amnesty programme has a significant positive effect on the educational advancement of ex-militants in the Niger Delta states ( $t = 2.20$ ,  $p = .028 < .05$ ). Furthermore, the F-statistic also shows that there is a significant positive relationship between the amnesty programme and educational advancement of ex-militants in the Niger Delta ( $F_{(1,522)} = 4.48$ ,  $p = .028 < .05$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected since the t-test probability value is less than the chosen alpha ( $t = 2.20$ ,  $p = .028 < .05$ ).



**Hypothesis Three: Budgetary provision of the amnesty programme has a significant effect on human capital development of ex-militants in the Niger Delta.**

**Table 3: Regression F-ratio and t-test on the effect of budgetary provision of amnesty programme on human capital development of ex-militants in the Niger Delta states**

Statistics	Independent Variable: Amnesty Programme(A P)	Dependent Variable: Human Capital Development(H CD)
Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	.815	6.92
Standardized Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	.348	-
Standard Error(S E)	1.27	6.10
t-statistic	.64	1.14
Prob(t-statistic)	.567	.339
R	.348	
R-square	.121	
Adjusted R square	.172	
Std Error of Estimate	.1455	
F-statistic	.412	
Prob (F-statistic)	.567	

**Source:** SPSS computed output, 2018; Chosen Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) = .05;  $HCD_i = b_0 + b_2BP_i$ ;  $HCD_i = 6.92 + .815BP$

Table 3 demonstrates the inferential statistics to determine the effect of budgetary provision of the amnesty programme on human capital development of ex-militants in the Niger Delta region in Nigeria. The unstandardized and standardized coefficients of the independent variable are .82 and .35 respectively. This suggests that the amnesty programme had a positive effect on the educational advancement of ex-militants in the Niger Delta. In view of the t-statistic, the result indicates that the budgetary provision of the amnesty programme has an insignificant but positive effect on the human capital development of ex-militants in the Niger Delta states ( $t = .64$ ,  $p = .57 > .05$ ). Furthermore, the F-statistic also shows that there is an insignificant but positive relationship between the budgetary provision of the amnesty programme and human capital development of ex-militants in the Niger Delta ( $F_{(1,522)} = .41$ ,  $p = .57 > .05$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted since the t-test probability value is greater than the chosen alpha ( $t = .64$ ,  $p = .57 > .05$ ).



**Hypothesis Four: There is a significant difference in the level of human capital development of ex-militants among the states in the Niger Delta.**

**Table 4: F-test (one way Analysis of Variance - ANOVA) on the difference in the level of human capital development of ex-militants among the Niger Delta states**

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8575084.833	5	1715016.967	1.055	.417
Within Groups	29261974.500	18	1625665.250		
Total	37837059.333	23			

**Source:** SPSS computed output, 2018; Chosen Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) = .05

In Table 4 above, one way analysis of variance as a test statistic is presented to ascertain the statistically significant difference in the level of human capital development of ex-militants across the six states in the Niger Delta region. The result shows that there is no significant difference in the level of human capital development among the six states in the Niger Delta ( $F_{(5, 18)} = 1.06$ ,  $p > .05$ ). The null hypothesis is accepted since the probability value is greater than the chosen alpha ( $F_{(5, 18)} = 1.06$ ,  $p = .417 > .05$ ).

**Hypothesis Five: There is a significant difference in the factors responsible for the setback in the implementation of the amnesty programme among the states in the Niger Delta.**

**Table 5: F-test (one way Analysis of Variance - ANOVA) on the difference in the factors responsible for the setback in the implementation of the amnesty programme among the Niger Delta states**

S/N	Variables	F test computed	P Value	Chosen Alpha( $\alpha$ ) .05	Remark/ Decision
1	Deplorable condition of camps for ex-militants	56.07	.000	P <.05	Significant/Reject $H_0$
2	Delay in payment of subsistence allowance	33.17	.000	P <.05	“
3	Unconventional approach in the amnesty programme	6.73	.000	P <.05	“
4	Lack of consolidated peace agreement	6.87	.000	P <.05	“
5	Lack of all-inclusive approach to the programme	6.92	.000	P <.05	“
6	Premium interest in the allowances rather than training by ex-militants	15.02	.000	P <.05	“
7	Huge sums of money paid to consultants	2.42	.026	P <.05	“
8	Vested interest and corruption in the amnesty	26.07	.000	P <.05	“
	Grand Average	12.15	.003	P <.05	“

**Source:** SPSS computed output, 2018; Chosen Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) = .05; Df:  $F_{(6,517)}$



Table 5 demonstrates the F-ratios that determine the significant difference in factors responsible for the setback in the implementation of the amnesty programme among the Niger Delta states in Nigeria. The result indicates that there was a significant difference for each of the factors responsible for the implementation of the amnesty programme. In consideration of all the factors, the result shows that there is a significant difference in the factors responsible for the setback in the implementation of the amnesty programme among the states in the Niger Delta ( $F_{(6, 517)} = 12.15$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The null hypothesis is rejected since the probability value is less than the chosen alpha ( $F_{(6, 517)} = 12.15$ ,  $p = .003 < .05$ ).

## DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The discussion of findings is in line with the objectives of the study presented in the beginning. The findings of the study were compared with the empirical evidence of previous scholars as to whether the present research findings underpin or disagree with the outcome of previous studies and theoretical foundations.

The first aim of the study was to examine the effect of the amnesty programme on vocational skill acquisition of ex-militants in the Niger Delta region in Nigeria. The finding of the study that the amnesty programme had a significant positive effect on vocational skill acquisition buttressed the position of Odiya and Odiya (2013) who asserted that over 5,000 ex-militants graduated from the Niger Delta amnesty vocational skills acquisition scheme from within and outside the country, and that the skills acquired were in the areas of welding and fabrication, pipe fitting, carpentry and plumbing, oil drilling, electrical installation and entrepreneurship. However, the finding of the present study was diametrically opposed to the perspective of Oluwaniyi (2011) who stated that ex-militants were only interested in the financial benefits of the amnesty programme and thus the training programme did not have an impact on the lives of ex-militants and the society. In view of the skills acquired by ex-militants, the ex-militants can be gainfully employed and become economically self-reliant rather than resorting to the use of arms and kidnapping as the means of livelihood. This scenario underpins the frustration-aggression theoretical postulation of Dollard et al. (1939). They enunciated that “aggression is always a consequence of frustration.” In addition, Amaraegbu (2011) argued that individuals are motivated to achieve life ambitions and fulfill destiny but when these expectations are thwarted, frustration becomes the order of the day. Although the amnesty programme addressed individual needs rather than addressing the region wide fundamental issues, the vocational skills acquisition had undoubtedly mitigated the spate of violence from aggrieved youths in the region.

The second objective was to ascertain the effect of the amnesty programme on the university educational advancement of ex-militants in the Niger Delta. The finding of the current study that the Federal Government amnesty programme had a significant positive effect on the educational advancement is in agreement with Odiya and Odiya (2013) that through the amnesty programme, several youths from the Niger Delta region graduated from tertiary institutions of learning from within and outside the country, such as Ghana, South Africa, Russia and many others. Furthermore, the finding supports the study of Shobande et al. (2004) that there was a nexus between investment in human capital and economic development. The scholars in addition stated that investment in education brings returns to individuals and nations through income distribution, wage and salary differentials. This presupposes that the university



educational advancement of ex-militants in the Niger Delta by the Federal Government amnesty programme improved the standard of living of the youths and the region by extension.

The result attempted to demonstrate the extent of the effect of the budgetary provision of the amnesty programme on human capital development of ex-militants in the Niger Delta states. The finding of the present study is that budgetary provisions for the amnesty programme had an insignificant but positive effect on the human capital development in the Niger Delta region in Nigeria. Although the finding is not statistical significant, it partly concurs with the perspectives of Carneiro and Heckman(2003) and Cunha et al. (2006) that investment in education and vocational skills acquisition to developing human capital bring returns, earnings and income at the individual level as well as economic growth, development and competitiveness as a nation. Carneiro et al. (2006) further indicated that investment in human capital development increases Gross National Product and reduces poverty. In view of these assertions, the billions of naira earmarked annually for the educational advancement and vocational skills acquisition of ex-militants in the Niger Delta is a worthwhile investment for the Niger Delta region. The returns and gains may not be visible in the short run but the region and Nigeria as a nation stand to benefit substantially in the long run.

The fourth objective was evaluated with one-way analysis of variance as a test statistic was presented to ascertain the statistical significant difference in the level of human capital development of ex-militants across the six states in the Niger Delta region. The result showed that there was no significant difference in the level of human capital development among the six states in the Niger Delta. The null hypothesis was accepted since the probability value was greater than the chosen alpha. The result suggested that all the states in the region were adequately considered for the assignment of ex-militants for vocational training and educational advancement.

The fifth result was to determine the significant difference in factors responsible for the setback in the implementation of the amnesty programme among the Niger Delta states in Nigeria. The result indicated that there was a significant difference for each of the factors responsible for the implementation of the amnesty programme. In consideration of all the factors, the result showed that there was a significant difference in the factors responsible for the setback in the implementation of the amnesty programme among the states in the Niger Delta. The findings were in agreement with the submissions of Davidheiser and Nyiayaana (2009) that the general living conditions of the rehabilitation camps were deplorable, resulting in the death of some ex-militants while in the rehab centres and many other factors of corruption and vested interest, as was highlighted (Ojo, 2009).



## RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings of the study, it was recommended that:

- i. The amnesty programme of the Federal Government of Nigeria should be committed to exposing ex-militants to vocational skill acquisition schemes to ensure self-reliance.
- ii. The federal government should improve on the university educational advancement for ex-militants to acquire professional certification in the Niger Delta states.
- iii. The federal government should earmark a specific percentage of the total budgetary provision of the amnesty for human capital development in the Niger Delta.
- iv. The human capacity building of ex-militants by the federal government should avoid discriminatory approaches among the states in the Niger Delta.
- v. The federal government should ensure that the Amnesty Office in collaboration with the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission prosecute corrupt officers who thwart the smooth implementation of the amnesty programme.

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## DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

We declare that the authors have no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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