

Presidential Amnesty Program (PAP) and Human Capital Development in Niger-Delta

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Abstract

The study examines the impact of Presidential Amnesty Program (PAP) on human capital development in Niger-Delta. The study used primary data and the population of the study consist of the participant of the PAP in the Niger Delta Region, out of which 232 participants were randomly selected as the sample size using simple random sampling technique. Structured questionnaires were used to gather information from the respondents and the information gathered was presented in tables, pie and graphs and SSPS were used to test for the impact of PAP on human capital development in the Niger-Delta. The result of the study shows that PAP has a positive impact on human capital development in the Niger-Delta. The indicators and findings of the study shows that PAP has the potentials to improve the level of human capital development in the region and in the country at large. However, the challenges observed are that some delegates were selected but not trained and empowered. Some did not benefit from the training, employment and empowerment. Therefore, the framework for PAP should be strengthened by increasing the capacity of the program to accommodate more delegates for training and education for sustainable human capital development in the Niger-Delta Region as well as enduring peace.

Keywords: *Presidential amnesty program, Human capital development, Niger-Delta*

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Background to the Study

The oil boom in Nigeria has been driven by oil extracted from the Niger Delta region. Oil wealth, from the Niger Delta region, is largely responsible for sustaining the Nigerian Federation (UNDP, 2015). Despite fueling much of Nigeria's economic growth, the Niger Delta is somewhat marginalized from Nigeria's national development. Essentially, there is a significant disconnect between the wealth the region generates for the Nigerian Federation and the transnational oil companies extracting oil from the region, and the region's human development progress. Analysis of poverty and human development indicators paints a dreary picture for the Niger Delta.

The region's human development index (HDI) is 0.564 and while this is slightly higher than the Nigerian HDI of 0.448, the area rates far below regions or countries with similar gas or oil reserves countries like Venezuela and Indonesia with HDI of 0.772 and 0.697 respectively (UNDP, 2015). When further disaggregated to the local government level, the Niger Delta Human Development Report shows that state and regional HDI scores mask inequalities in human development among oil producing communities. Significantly, local government areas without oil facilities appear to have fewer poor people than those with oil facilities (UNDP, 2015). The decline in the HDI has been steeper for the Niger Delta states than the rest of Nigeria (UNDP, 2015). In addition, the high earnings of some oil industry workers leads to localized price distortions, driving up prices and so constraining the purchasing power of ordinary people and making it difficult for many to meet the costs of basic needs such as housing, healthcare, transportation, education and making poverty more pervasive than conventional measures revealed (UNDP, 2015).

Government in the bite to increase the living conditions and the wellbeing of the region, the PAP was introduced in the Niger-Delta. In addition to government effort in empowering the region, there was Presidential Amnesty granted by Late President Yar'Adua in 2009 leading to the setup of the Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP), to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate militants (DDR) who surrendered and accepted the amnesty into their communities, a plan for 2010-2015 in accordance with section 175 of the 1999 Constitution which provides that 'the President may grant any person concerned with or convicted of any offence created by an Act of the National Assembly a pardon, either free or subject to lawful conditions'. The high incidence of violence in the Niger Delta led to Amnesty initiatives. As a matter of fact, in the first nine months of the year 2008, about 1,000 people lost their lives, 300 were taken hostage and the government lost \$23.7 billion to attacks, oil bunkering and sabotage (Report of the Technical Committee on the Niger Delta, 2008). It was reported that out of 30,000 registered delegates, about 17,000 or more have been trained with variety of vocational skills, some sent to schools in and out of the country at higher level on scholarships. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to examine the activities of PAP and human capital development in Niger-Delta. While specific objectives of the study are to assess the relationship between PAP and youths educational achievement in the Niger-Delta and to investigate the impact of PAP on human capital development in the Niger-Delta region.

Literature Review

Conceptual Review on PAP, Human Capital Development

The word amnesty is a Greek word derived from “amnestia” which is an act of grace by which the supreme power in a State restores those who may have been guilty of any offence against it to the position of innocent persons (Novus homo) and it includes more than pardon, in as much as it obliterates all legal remembrances of the offences. It is also the act of authority by government in which pardon is granted to persons especially for political offences, and release from guilt or penalty of an offence (Ikelegbe & Umokoro, 2014). Amnesty has also been defined by Ikelegbe (2010) as: 'A guarantee of exemption from persecution and pardon from punishment for certain criminal, rebel and insurgent actions hitherto committed against the State. It indemnifies affected persons in terms of safety and protection from punitive actions, retributions and associated losses. An amnesty is usually within a specific time which offenders admits crime and takes advantage of the general pardon' (Ikelegbe, 2010).

On the other hand, Okojie (1995) opined that human capital refers to the “abilities and skills of the human resources of a country.” In the words of Marimuthu, Arokiasamy and Ismail (2009) human capital simply refer to the “processes that relate to training, education and other professional initiatives in order to increase the levels of knowledge, skills, abilities, values, and social assets of an employee which will lead to the employee's job satisfaction and performance.” Yesufu (2000), in agreement with this view, opines that “the essence of human capital development becomes one of ensuring that the workforce is continuously adapted for, and upgraded to meet, the new challenges of its total environment”. This implies that those already on the job requires retraining, reorientation or adaptation to meet the new challenges. This special human capacity can be acquired and developed through education, training, health promotion, as well as investment in all social services that influences man's productive capacities.

According to Yesufu (2002) human capital development have defined indicators, such elements can be refer to as determinants of human capital development which basic requirements for human capital development in developing country like Nigeria. Adamu (2003) stated that human capital development, education and training are essential. Education is concerned with the cultivation of the whole person including intellectual, character and psychomotor development. It is the human resources of any nation, rather than its physical capital and material resources that determines the character and pace of its economic and social development. Education matters, not only for personal development, health status, social inclusion and labour market prospect of individual learners, but also for broader economic performance of countries (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1996).

Health, just like education plays a vital role in the development of human capital. There exists nexus between health and education. Education facilitates general enlightenment in the economy as well as acquisition of the varied and much needed skills for the transformation of the society. It also has the tendency to foster a change in the attitudes

and habits which may be conducive to the attainment of high health status particularly, amongst people in developing countries where the major causes of death are largely preventable. So also, for the manpower and resources of a nation to be utilized to harness the other resources of a nation, the population must be healthy. Without good health, productivity will be low and to ensure adequate productivity, the majority of the population needs to be protected from illnesses.

Empirical Review

Beside the contribution of education on national economic growth, it also plays a significant role in reducing income inequality, research done by Phillip and Perron, (2009), this implies that any form of government investment on education have impact on the level of human capital development in the economy. Kakar and Khan, (2011) concluded that educational achievement and successfulness as well as human capital development would positively reduce income inequality. In general, there is a consensus among the researchers that education influenced economic growth by reducing poverty incidence, social imbalances as well as income equality. Moreover, it gives a positive impact to the poor and needy to improve their lives. In this regards, Jung and Thorbecke (2003) suggested that education is a main instrument to alleviating poverty.

It is argued that poverty alleviation can be achieved by giving education to the poor so that more job opportunities will be created, thus, more income to the individual and a country. Yogish (2006) has also found that education is a promising investment to a country by producing skilled and high skilled labour force. This skilled and high skilled labour force would definitely accelerate the country's economic development and consequently improve the quality of life. The empirical review of this study was limited to few because, most literature reviews are centered on the impact of education and human capital development on economic growth. This means there are little or no empirical literature on the impact of PAP on human capital development in Nigeria. Therefore, this study is to empirically examine the impact of PAP on human capital development in the Niger-Delta.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopted human capital theory as a framework because, the theory focuses on human capital investment and the societal benefits of that investment. According to Adedeji & Bamidele (2004), Human Capital Theory emphasizes that education increases the productivity and efficiency of workers by increasing the level of their cognitive skills. Schultz (1995) and Mincer (1995) introduced the notion that people invest in education to increase their stock of human capital. The proponents see human capital as the stock of economically productive human capabilities, which can be formed by combining innate abilities with investments in human beings especially by the government (Babalola, 2003).

Examples of such investments include expenditures on education, on-the-job-training, health and nutrition. Such expenditures increases future productive capacity at the

expense of current consumption. However, the stock of human capital increases in a period only when gross investment exceeds depreciation with the passage of time, with intense use or with lack of use. The provision of education is seen as a productive investment in human capital, an investment which the proponents of the human capital theory consider to be equal or even more equal worthwhile than that of physical capital.

In fact, the United States acknowledged that investment in human capital is three times better than in physical inputs (Adedeji and Bamidele, 2004). Human capital theorists have established that basic literacy enhances the productivity of workers in low-skill occupations. They further state that an instruction that demands logical or analytical reasoning, or provides technical and specialized knowledge, increases the marginal productivity of workers in high-skill or professional positions. Moreover, the greater the provision of schools, the greater the stocks of human capital in the society and consequently, the greater the increase in national productivity and economic growth.

Therefore, the theory supported that government programme on the investment of education and health of its citizens like PAP has the capacity to increase the skills and the abilities of individuals in the economy that is, the theory supported that programmes like PAP are targeted at increasing the human capital stock of the region and the entire country. Finally, the theory opined that increase in the activities of PAP will increase the level of human capital development in the Niger-Delta Region.

Methodology

Research Design

The design of the study is a descriptive survey and has elicited information from the respondents on PAP and human capital development in the Niger Delta. The instrument adopted for data collection in this study is a structured questionnaire which has two sections. The first section comprises of the respondent bio-data, such as: age, sex, qualification, and years of experience etc. while the second section comprises of the research questions on the impact of PAP and human capital development in the Niger Delta. The respondents are expected to tick the right options from the given options in both sections and provide explanations where necessary.

Population and Sample Size of the Study

The Niger Delta region enjoys a high level government intervention support for training, skills acquisition, youth empowerment and employment opportunities for the youths in the region. The population of this study is comprised of four categories of the Presidential Amnesty Programme in the region which are: the unskilled delegates, the skilled delegates, the skilled and employed delegates and the skilled and empowered delegates of about Eight thousand and sixty-seven (8067) delegates. Two hundred and thirty two (232) delegates were randomly selected from each group using simple random sampling technique. Therefore, the total sample size of this paper is two hundred and thirty two (232) delegates from the Presidential Amnesty Programme in the Niger Delta.

Method of Data Analysis

The responses of each subject were coded on the computer coding sheet, and thereafter, entered and processed, using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) program, mean and simple percentages were used for analysis and interpretation of the results. The frequency distributions of the various response categories were calculated. In order to obtain the item and section mean ratings, frequencies were weighed in the following manner: strongly agreed 4 points, agreed 3 points, disagreed 2 points and strongly disagreed 1 point.

The mean ratings to the various responses were calculated and were used to answer the research questions. The mean of 1, 2, 3 and 4 is 2.50 for the purpose of this study; a mean rating of 2.50 or above was regarded as significant while a mean rating of 2.50 or less was regarded as insignificant in explaining the changes in the variables under study. The mean ratings were used to answer the research questions while the t-test statistics method was applied to test the hypotheses using a statistical package for social sciences (SPSS), Computer Software Version 17.0. The T-statistics was used to test hypotheses at 0.05.

Data Presentation and Analysis

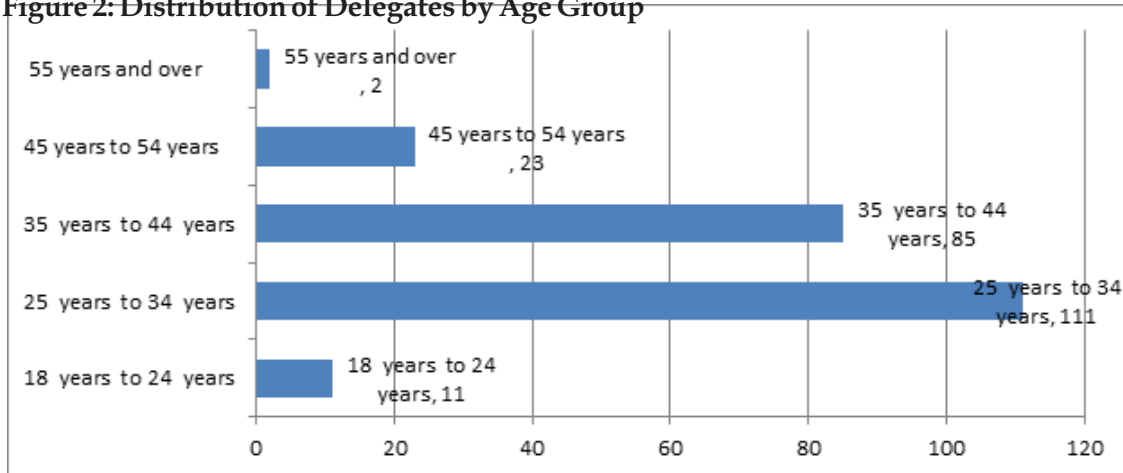
Data Presentation and Discussion

Figure 1: Distribution of Groups of Delegates by Gender



Source: Survey result, 2016

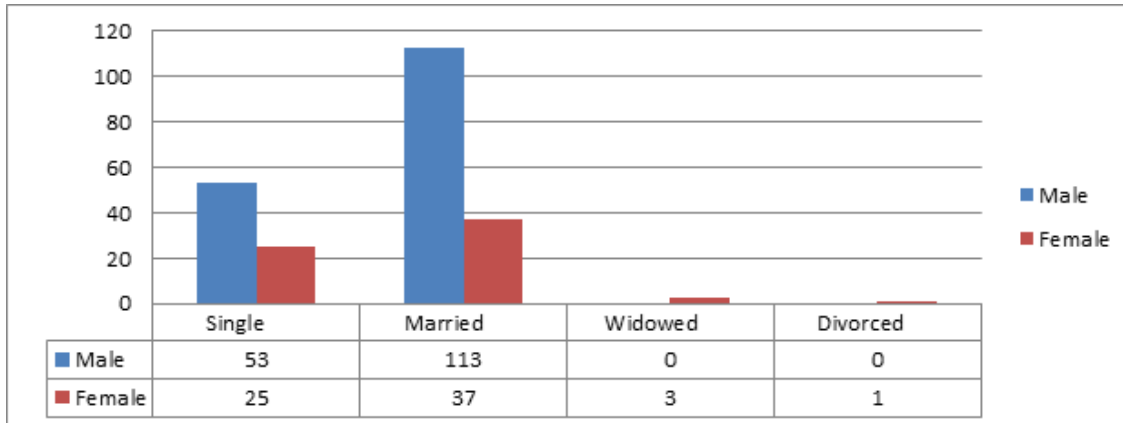
Figure 2: Distribution of Delegates by Age Group



Source: Survey Result, 2016

Figure 2 shows the age distribution of the delegates. Five percent (5%) of the total delegates or respondents falls between ages 18-24, 48% of the total delegates falls between ages 25-34, 36% of the total delegates fall between ages 35-44, 10% of the total delegates falls between ages 45-54 while 1% of the total delegates falls between ages 55 and over.

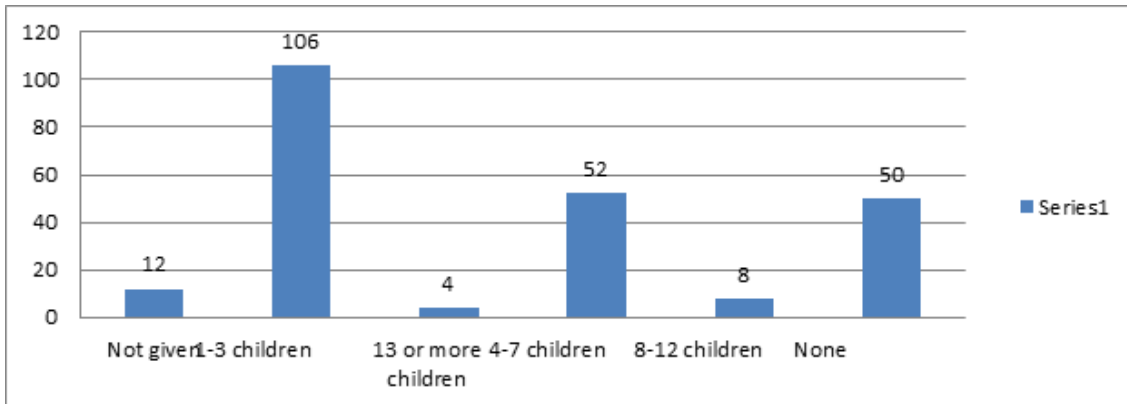
Figure 3: Distribution of Delegates by Marital Status and Gender



Source: Survey Result, 2016

Figure 3 shows the distribution of delegates by marital status and Gender. 53 male and 25 female are single, 113 male and 37 female are married, 0 male and 3 female are widowed while 0 male and 1 female are divorced.

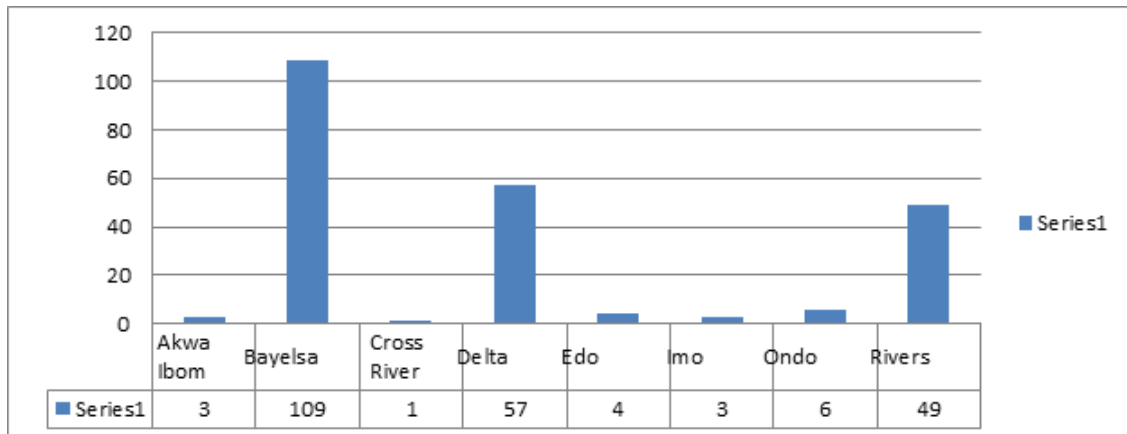
Figure 4: Distribution of Delegates by Number of Children



Source: Survey Result, 2016

Figure 4 shows the distribution of delegates by number of children. 12 out of the total delegates did not give the number of their children, 106 out of the total delegates has 1 to 3 children, 4 out of the total delegates has 13 and more children, 52 out of the total delegates has 4 to 7 children, 8 out of the total delegates has 8 to 12 children and 50 out of the total delegates has no children. The figure implied that many of the delegates have dependents who benefited from their programme directly and indirectly.

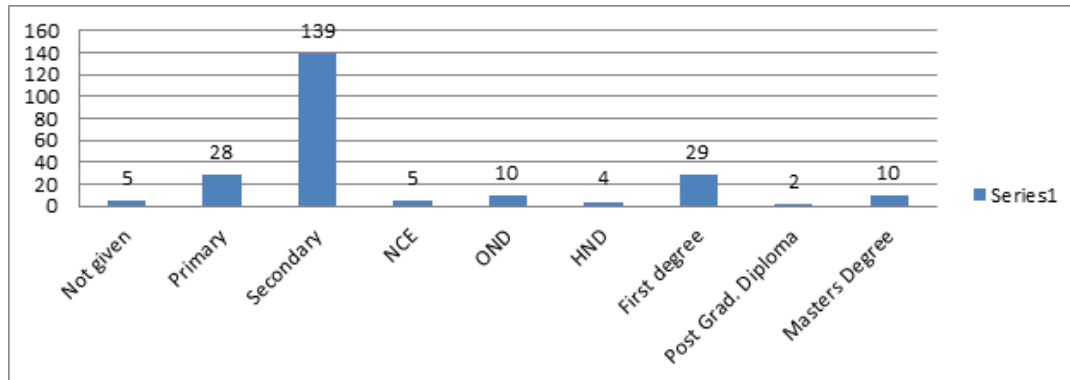
Figure 5: Distribution of Delegates by States of Origin



Source: Survey Result, 2016

Figure 5 shows the distribution of delegates by states of origin. 3 delegates are from Akwa-Ibom state, 109 delegates are from Bayelsa state, 1 delegate is from Cross river state, 57 delegates are from Delta state, 4 delegates are from Edo state, 3 delegates are from Imo state, 6 delegates are from Ondo state while 49 delegates are from Rivers state.

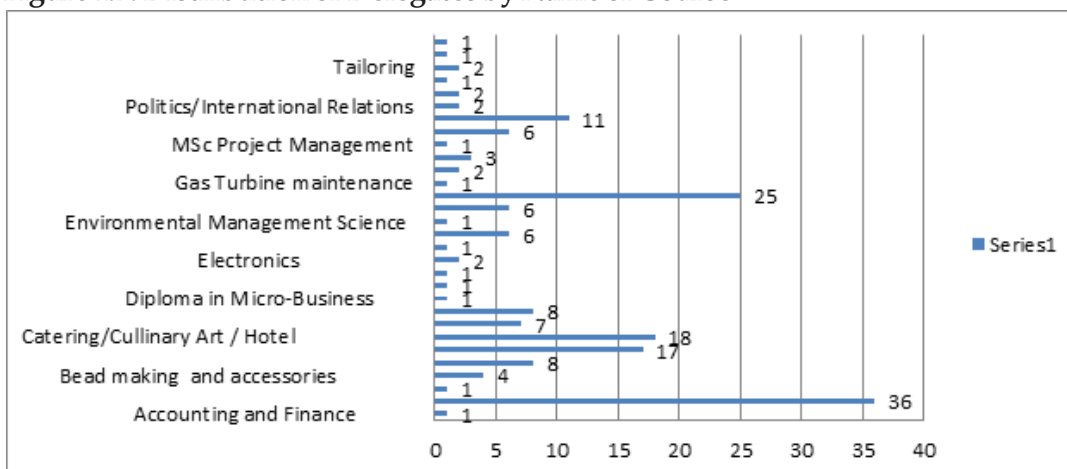
Figure 6: Distribution of Delegates by Highest Level of Education Attained



Source: Survey Result, 2016

Figure 6 shows the distribution of delegates by highest level of education attained. 5 delegates did not indicate the level of their education, 28 delegates are primary school holders, 139 of the delegates have secondary education, 5 delegates are NCE holders, 10 delegates are OND holders, 4 delegates are HND holders, 29 delegates are first degree holders, 2 delegates has post-graduate diploma while 10 delegates has master's degrees.

Figure 4.7: Distribution of Delegates by Name of Course

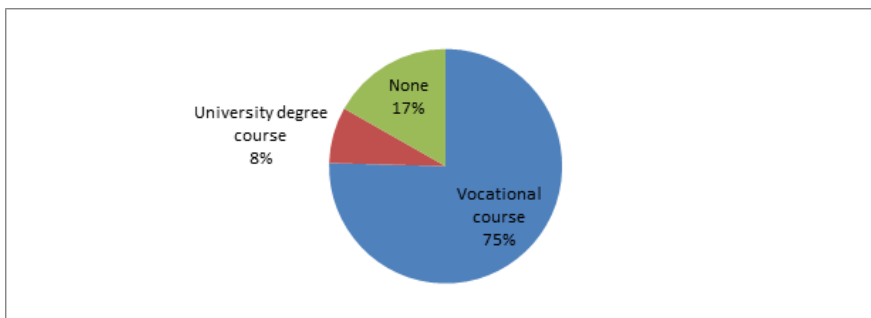


Source: Survey Result, 2016

Figure 7 shows the distribution of delegates by their courses. The following courses has one delegate each: Transport, Accounting and Finance, Automobile Engineering, Diploma in Micro-Business, drilling and Scaffolding, Electrical Installation, Engineering Project Management, Environmental Management Science, Gas Turbine maintenance, MSc Project Management, Real Estate Management and Wheel Operators. The following courses has two delegates each: Electronics, Marine Navigator/Maritime, Oil and Gas Engineering, Tailoring while three delegates studied Masters in Business Administration and 4 delegates studied Bead making and accessories.

Six of the delegates studied each of the following courses Entrepreneurship, Oceanography and Event management/ Interior decoration, seven of the delegates studied Computer and Information Science /ICT/Software, eight of the delegates studied Crane Operation and Building and eleven of the delegates studied Pipeline Welding/Welding and Fabrication. Exactly, 17, 18, 25 and 36 delegates studied Business Admin/Management, Catering/Cullinary Art / Hotel, Fashion and design and Agriculture & Aquaculture & Fish farming & Poultry respectively while 39 of the delegates did not state course of study and 16 of the delegates did not select any option.

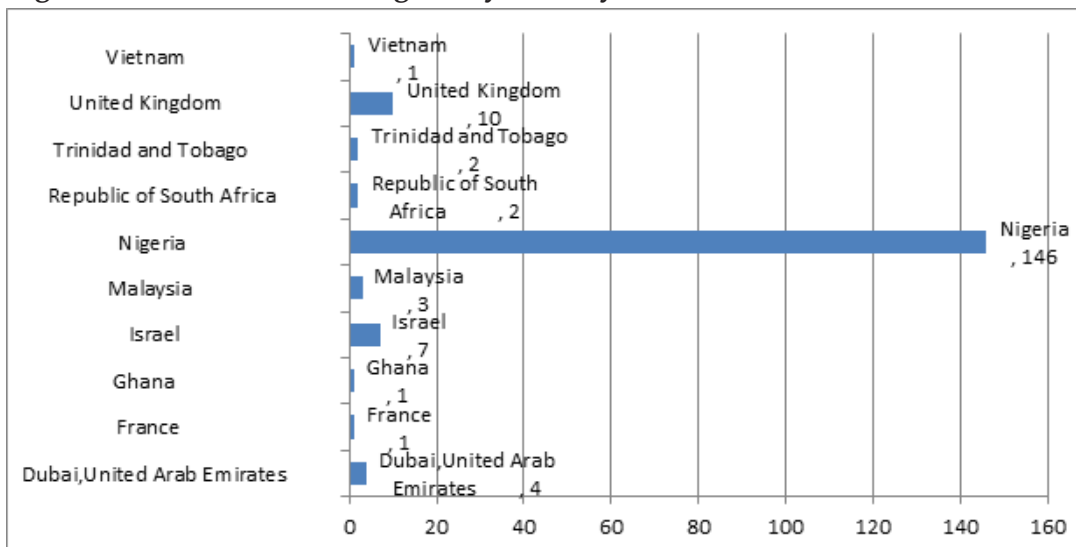
Figure 8: Distribution of Delegates by Type of PAP Course



Source: Survey Result, 2016

Figure 8 shows the distribution of delegates by type of PAP course. 8% of the delegates were engaged in university degree courses during the Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP), 17% of the delegates were not involved in the Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP), while 75% of the total delegates were engaged in vocational courses during the presidential amnesty programme (PAP).

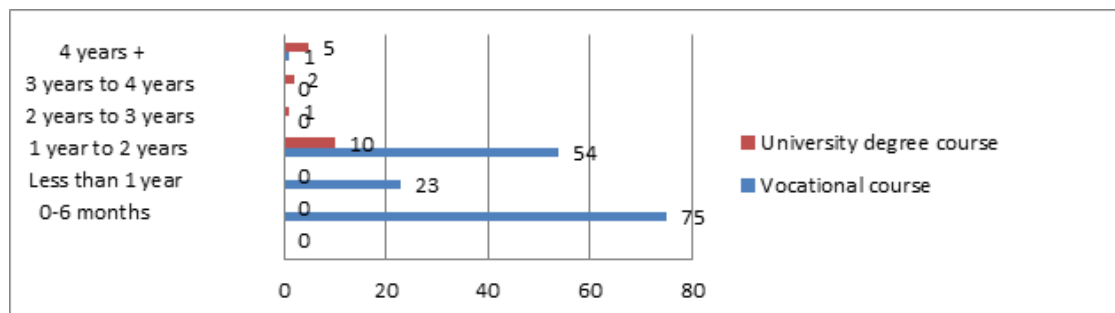
Figure 9: Distribution of Delegates by Country of PAP Course



Source: Survey Result, 2016

Figure 9 shows the distribution of delegates by country of PAP courses. 82% of the total delegates that participated in the presidential amnesty programme are from Nigeria, 6% of the delegates are from United Kingdom, 4% of the delegates are from Israel, 2% of the delegates are from Malaysia, 2% of the delegates are from the United Arab Emirates, 1% of the delegates are from Ghana, 1% of the delegates are from Trinidad and Tobago, and another 1% of the delegates are from Republic of South Africa and 0% from France.

Figure 4.10: Distribution of Delegates by PAP Course Length and PAP Course Type



Source: Survey Result, 2016

Figure 10 shows the distribution of delegates by PAP Course Length and PAP Course Type. Five (5) delegates spent 4 years and above in their university degree courses while 1 delegate spent 4 years and few months in vocational course in the presidential amnesty programme, 2 delegates spent 3 to 4 years in their university degree courses, 1 delegate spent 2 to 3 years in his university degree course, 10 delegates spent 1 to 2 years in their university degree courses while 54 delegates spent 1 to 2 years in their vocational courses, 23 delegates spent less than 1 year in their vocational courses and 75 delegates spent 0-6 months in the vocational courses in the presidential amnesty programme (PAP).

Impact Analysis of PAP on Human Capital Development in Niger-Delta

Table 1: Positive Relationship between PAP and Youth Education Achievement in Niger-Delta

The support of PAP have helped the Niger-Delta youths in their education achievement	Frequency	Percentage %
Strongly agreed	103	44
Agreed	121	52a
Disagreed	006	0.03
Strongly disagreed	002	0.009
Total	232	100

Source: Survey Result, 2016.

From Table 1, 44 percent of the total respondents strongly agreed that there is a positive relationship between PAP and Youth Education Achievement in Niger-Delta, 52 percent of the total respondents agreed that there is a positive relationship between PAP and

Youth Education Achievement in Niger-Delta, 0.03 percent of the total respondents disagreed to the fact that there is a positive relationship between PAP and Youth Education Achievement in Niger-Delta and 0.009 percent of the total respondents strongly disagreed with the fact that there is a positive relationship between PAP and Youth Education Achievement in Niger-Delta.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics results for Positive Relationship between PAP and Youth Education Achievement in Niger-Delta

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic
VAR00001	232	1.00	4.00	3.2571	.05606	.88696	.829
Valid N (listwise)	232						

Note: The mean of 1, 2, 3 and 4 is 2.50 for the purpose of this study; a mean rating of 2.51 or above was regarded as significant while a mean rating 2.50 or less was regarded as insignificant in explaining the changes in the variables under study.

On Table 4.2, the mean statistic is 3.3; this implies that there is a positive relationship between PAP and Youth Education Achievement in Niger-Delta. Since the calculated mean statistic is greater than 2.50, the alternative hypothesis i.e. H_1 is accepted meaning that there is a positive relationship between PAP and Youth Education Achievement in Niger-Delta, and H_0 is rejected meaning that there is no positive relationship between PAP and Youth Education Achievement in Niger-Delta.

Table 3: The Positive impact of PAP on Human Capital Development in Niger-Delta

The support of PAP has increased the level of Human Capital Development in Niger-Delta	Frequency	Percentage %
Strongly agreed	101	44
Agreed	118	51
Disagreed	009	0.04
Strongly disagreed	004	0.017
Total	232	100

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

From Table 4.3, 44 percent of the total respondents strongly agreed that there is positive impact of PAP on Human Capital Development in Niger-Delta, 51 percent of the total respondents agreed that there is positive impact of PAP on Human Capital Development in Niger-Delta, 0.04 percent of the total respondents disagreed to the fact that there is positive impact of PAP on Human Capital Development in Niger-Delta and 0.017 percent of the total respondents strongly disagreed the fact that there is positive impact of PAP on Human Capital Development in Niger-Delta.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics results Positive impact PAP on Human Capital Development in Niger-Delta

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic
VAR00002	232	1.00	4.00	3.8524	.06942	0.80602	.912
Valid N (listwise)	232						

Note: The mean of 1, 2, 3 and 4 is 2.50 for the purpose of this study; a mean rating of 2.51 or above was regarded as positive impact while a mean rating of 2.50 or less was regarded as no impact in explaining the changes in the variables under study.

From Table 4 the calculated mean statistic is 3.9 and it shows that there is positive impact of PAP on Human Capital Development in Niger-Delta. Since the calculated mean is greater than 2.50, the alternative i.e. H_1 is accepted meaning that there is positive impact of PAP on Human Capital Development in Niger-Delta, and while the H_0 is rejected meaning that there is no positive impact of PAP on Human Capital Development in Niger-Delta

Summary of the Major Findings

The study revealed that majority of the youths registered in the PAP were engaged in educational activities in Nigeria and other countries in the world and they were trained in various vocational activities and disciplines. From the data presented, both male and female were engaged in the PAP and across the nine states of the Niger-Delta region. The result of the study revealed that PAP has strong relationship with education achievement of youths in the region. This implies that PAP has the capacity to increase the educational status of youths in the region and the study also revealed that PAP has a positive impact on human capital development in Niger- Delta. That is, PAP in the region has increased the level of human capital stock in the region this agreed to the work of Phillip and Perron, (2009), that said any form of government investment on education have impact on the level of human capital development in the economy. Therefore, the study concluded that increase in PAP activities have the ability to improve the level of human capital development in the Niger-Delta.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The amnesty programme is also gender sensitive in the skill acquisition and empowerment. Many of the skilled, employed and empowered delegates are females and majority of the delegates are married and have dependents under them. This implies that the training, employment and empowerment have multiplier effects on the households and families of the delegates especially the beneficiaries. Many of the delegates who are empowered with entrepreneurial skills and financial resources to start-up businesses are

able to grow their businesses with good profit margin and these businesses are able to create more jobs in the region therefore, having multiplier effects on other households and families employed by the beneficiaries of the Amnesty programme in the region.

The indicators and findings of the survey of the delegates presented shows that Presidential Amnesty Programme for skills acquisition has the socio-economic potentials to improve the wellbeing of the citizens in the region and in the country at large. The programme should be sustained and given the desired attention and resources. The programme has actually yielded positive results for human capital development in the country especially in the region, but the challenges observed should be addressed. Some delegates were selected, trained but not employed or empowered. Some did not benefit from the training, employment and empowerment. These among other problems of policy inconsistencies, bureaucratic red tape, lack of transparency in business of government, lack of consumer oriented consultations in policy initiation or formulation, lack of capacity for policy implementation, obstacles arising from political and social considerations, poor leadership, inadequate support institutions and resources for policy implementation needs to be addressed.

These problems can reduce the success level of the programme and the capacity of the programme in human capital development in the region and the country entirely if not addressed. Therefore, the following are the policy recommendations to sustain the achievements of the Presidential Amnesty Programme in Niger Delta region and in Nigeria at large.

Recommendations

- I. The framework for Presidential Amnesty Programme should be strengthened by increasing the capacity of the programme to accommodate more delegates and give support to all delegates selected during the start up of the programme because from the data collected, some delegates were selected but not empowered or employed and some not trained at all.
- ii. The number of female in the programme should be increased because from the information presented the ratio of male over the female delegates in the programme is too much. Therefore, government should adopt mechanism that will help to reduce the gap.
- iii. The programme should bring in private organizations and encourage public-private partnership to increase the scope of service delivery of the programme and also attract more funds and support for efficiency and effectiveness of the programme in the region.
- iv. Finally, government should design a mechanism to monitor the activities of PAP especially in the area of finance so that what is released equals what is spent and in order to prevent mismanagement and diversion of funds.

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