Journal of Learning and Educational Policy
ISSN: 2799-1121
Vol: 02, No. 01, Dec 2021-Jan 2022
http://journal.hmjournals.com/index.php/JLEP
DOI: https://doi.org/10.55529/jlep.21.30.39

Technical Vocational Education and Training as aTool for Achieving the Goals of Amnesty Programmes in Niger Delta

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Received: 18 September 2021 **Accepted:** 08 December 2021 **Published:** 19 January 2022

Abstract: ***The study examined Technical Vocational Education and Training as a Tool for achieving the goals of amnesty programmes in Niger Delta. Three research questions were answered, and corresponding null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population of the study was 2545 respondents. Purposive sampling technique was used in the selection of 765 respondents (Beneficiary = 692; Instructor = 73) that participated in the study. Data were collected through a self-structured questionnaire designed in the patterned of Modified 4-point rating scale of agreement. A reliability coefficient of 0.81 was established through Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions while z-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study found that mechanical, electrical/electronic and building related skill-based progarmmes are used to achieve amnesty goals in Niger Delta region. based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that crime offenders should be rehabilitated with vocational skills such as auto-mechanic technology, welding and fabrication, boat building, agriculture and others. This will help in diverting the interest of youths from crime to becoming responsible citizens. At least three (3) world class vocational/technical training centers should be built in each senatorial zone in Rivers State to help train youths that can compete with youths outside the country, hence developing the state technologically.***

Keyword; Technical, Vocational, Education, Training, Tool, Amnesty Programmes.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Niger Delta region, located in the southern part of Nigeria, remained the treasure base of the Nigerian state in the past five decades. The area harbours over 95 percent of Nigeria's crude oil and gas resources, which accounts for 90 percent of the country's foreign exchange earnings

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(Agbegbedia, 2014). It is also Africa's largest wetland with extensive lowlands, swamps, estuaries, creeks and rivers. Despite its resource endowment, the region has been plagued by development neglects, trickle natural resource benefits, marginality in political representation and the oil economy (Ikelegbe, 2010). The oil and gas infrastructure have led to extensive environmental degradation, destruction of livelihood sources, socio-economic disruptions and extensive poverty. These conditions generated agitation and protests beginning from the 1970s (Ikelegbe, 2010; Faleti, 2007). The Niger Delta people have been in the agitation for justice for over four decades for the abuse of human rights and environmental degradation in the region which gave rise to the emergence of organized pressure groups and militant activities in the region (Agbegbedia, 2014). The Ogoni environmental protests internationalized the agitation and catalyzed further protests which by the late 1990s, turned into a youth driven militant agitation for resource control and state reforms (Ikelegbe, 2010). The agitation turned into an insurgency between 1998 and 2009, with thousands of youth militias engaging the oil companies and the Nigerian security agencies, accompanied by extensive devastation of oil infrastructure, abduction and kidnapping of oil companies' staff, disruption of oil and gas production and attacks on oil tankers on the maritime waters. The level of violence almost tipped to a point of outright warfare, when by June 25th, 2009, the late President Umaru Yar'Adua publicly announced a 60 days amnesty offer to be effective from August 4th to October 4th, 2009. This was to halt the hostilities in the Niger Delta region and to show commitment of government towards achieving peace and development in the region. This declaration was made in order to sub pedal the hostile activities around the Niger Delta region. For this to be accomplished, the federal government embark on organizing the "Amnesty Programme" which to engage the angry and aggrieved persons in meaning activities. Thus, the Amnesty programme hinged on a Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) programme was adopted in 2009 as a strategy to end the insurgency and restore the oil and gas industry and production. In fact, the Amnesty Programme was set up to bring peace to the troubled Niger Delta region in order to facilitate oil production and eventual development of the region. The programme was designed to ensure peace and reconciliation to facilitate uninterrupted oil exploration thereby boosting revenue that would be deployed towards tackling a wide range of problems of underdevelopment in the Niger Delta region (Ajayi & Adesote, 2013). The granting of amnesty to ex-militants initially reduced the spate of violence and invariably increased oil production in the region.

Also, the Federal Government proclamation of unconditional amnesty for Niger Delta ex-agitators included the willingness and readiness for them to surrender their arms and ammunitions on or before the expiring date October 4th, 2009. So far, 30,000 ex-agitators have accepted the FG amnesty programme. In pursuant to the letter, the FG also instituted a Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) package for those who embraced amnesty before the deadline with a #65,000 monthly stipend being paid to ex-militants who accepted the offer of amnesty (Kuku, 2012). The amnesty was also accompanying with educational and technical vocational training. Those in educational were offered opportunitiesto further their education or to start a new programme while others were trained on skill base training such as pipe fitting, argon welding, electrical instrumentation among others that can make to be engage in meaning trade to make self-reliant. Hence, technical and vocational education and training was a potent tool for the achievement of amnesty programme within the Niger Delta region

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Technical Vocational Educational and Training (TVET) with its relevant practical training component is widely recognized as the key to any nation becoming technologically relevant and internationally competitive in the world market. According to Okwelle (2013), TVET broadly refers to deliberate interventions to bring about learning which would make people more productive (or simply adequately productive) in designated areas of economic activity (e.g., economic sectors, occupations, specific work tasks). TVET is also regarded as the most effective means of empowering the citizenry to stimulate sustainable national development, enhance employment, improve the quality of life, reduce poverty, limit the incidence of social vices due to joblessness and promote a culture of peace, freedom and democracy (FME, 2000). Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is that aspect of education that exposes the learner to acquisition of demonstrable skills that could be transformed into economic benefits (Akerele, 2007).

According to Dike (2009), TVET is that aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of skills as well as basic scientific knowledge. It is a planned program of courses and learning experiences that begins with exploration of career options, supports basic academic and life skills, and enables achievement of high academic standards, leadership, preparation for industry-defined work, and advanced and continuing education (Maclean & Wilson, 2009). The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) seesTVE as a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life'. Technical education can therefore be the formaltraining of persons to become technicians in different occupations.

Amnesty is derived from a Greek word amnestia meaning forgetfulness. It is therefore definedas a grant of general pardon or as a general pardon granted by a government especially for political offences (free dictionary, 2011). In international law, amnesty is defined as the act of effacing and forgetting past offences granted by the government to persons who have been guilty of neglect or crime (Encarta, 2009). The philosophy behind the design of amnesty is to achieve the followings: to alleviate internal pressure, protect state agents from prosecution, promote peace and reconciliation, respond to international pressure, provide reparations, encourage exiles to return and adhering to religious or cultural traditions (O'Shea, 2002). Despite the controversy associated with amnesty, the yardstick behind the granting of amnesty remains potent. The philosophy behind the design of amnesty is to achieve the followings: to ameliorate internal pressure, protect state agents from prosecution, promote peace and reconciliation, respond to international pressure, provide reparations, encourage exiles to return and adhering to religious or cultural traditions (O'Shea, 2002).

Thus, any education that is geared towards teaching technical skills and attitudes suitable to such skills can be regarded as technical education. The primary objective of all TVE programsis the acquisition of skills and attitudes for gainful employment in a specific occupation or professional area. The need to link training in TVE to employment either self or paid employment is at the base of all the best practices and approaches observed throughout the world. One of the most significant aspects of TVE is its inclination towards the world of work and the emphasis of the curriculum on the acquisition of employable skills. TVE delivery systems are therefore, well placed to train the skilled workforces that the nation needs create

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employment for the youths and emerge out of poverty. Based on the above, if TVET is inculcated deeply into amnesty programmes, it will make them to be self-reliant through acquisition of one skill or the other.

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, militancy has been a major problem in Nigeria, especially in the Niger Delta region where the people perceive to be marginalized and deprived from active participation in the share of wealth accrued from their land. Several attempts by the government to quell this menace proved abortive, not until 2009 when repentant militants were given amnesty and further trained in vocational/technical skills. According to Odalonu and Eronmhonsele (2015), while the rehabilitation programme lasted, there was relative peace within Niger Delta region and the oil production increased to 2 million barrels per day. Therefore, it is expedient to find out whether Technical Vocational Education and Training Programmes can be used as a tool to achieve the goals of amnesty in peace making in Niger Delta.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine how technical vocational education and training can be used to achieve the goals of amnesty programmes in Niger Delta. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Find out mechanical related skills that could be used to achieve the goals ofamnesty programmes in Niger Delta.
2. Find out electrical/electronic related skills that could be used to achieve thegoals of amnesty programmes in Niger Delta.
3. Find out building related skills that could be used to achieve the goals ofamnesty programmes in Niger Delta.

Research Questions

The following research questions were asked and answered in this study.

1. What are the mechanical related skills that could be used to achieve the goals ofamnesty programmes in Niger Delta?
2. What are the electrical/electronic related skills that could be used to achieve thegoals of amnesty programmes in Niger Delta?
3. What are the building related skills that could be used to achieve the goals ofamnesty programmes in Niger Delta?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significance difference in the mean response of training instructorsand amnesty beneficiaries on how mechanical related skills can be used to achieve the goals of amnesty programmes in Niger Delta.
2. There is no significance difference in the mean response of training instructorsand amnesty beneficiaries on how electrical/electronic related skills can be used to achieve the goals of amnesty programmes in Niger Delta.
3. There is no significance difference in the mean response of training instructorsand amnesty beneficiaries on how building related skills can be used to achieve the goals of amnesty

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programmes in Niger Delta.

2. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The present study is a descriptive survey because the researcher collected data from a large sample of those that benefitted from the amnesty programmes in TVET and described how it help in achieving the goals of amnestyin Niger Delta. The study was carried out in Rivers State. The population of the study comprised all the militants of the amnesty programme in Rivers State. As at the time of the study, there were an estimated population of 2472 militants who benefited from the amnesty programmes in Rivers State and 73 training instructors (National Directorate of Employment [NDE] 2020). A sample of 765 respondents (Beneficiary = 692; Instructor = 73) that participated in vocational training of the amnesty programme was used for the study. The sample size represents 28% of the estimated population of militants who benefited from vocational training in Rivers State and the training instructors. Purposive sampling method wasused to select only those militants that was engage in vocational training of the amnesty programmes. Purposive sampling was employed because the amnesty programmes were of different categories and sections.
The instrument for the study was a self-structured questionnaire which was used to assess how TVET has been used to achieve the goals of amnesty programmes in Rivers State among Niger Delta States. For those beneficiaries that could understand, the instrument were read to them to seek their response on it. This is to ensure that all the sampled respondents participated in the study. The questionnaire was structured in the pattern of 4-point Modified Likert rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA-), Agree (A-3), Disagree (D-2) and Strongly Disagreed (SD-1). The instrument was face validated by two experts in the Department of Vocational and Technology Education in Rivers State University, Port-Harcourt. The reliability of the instrument was established using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) method for a measure of internal consistency of the instrument. Copies of the instrument were administeredto 13 amnesty beneficiary and 9 instructors that were drawn from Bayelsa State using purposive sampling method. The coefficient value obtained was 0.81 which was used to judge the reliability of the instrument and was considered high enough for the study. Out 692 and 73 copies that were distributed to beneficiary and instructors respectively, only 604 and 67 were successfully filled and retrieved. The retrieved instruments were used for the analysis of this study. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions while z-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Mean values less than 2.50 were disagree, while Mean values equal or greater than 2.50 were agree.

3. RESULTS

Research Question 1: What are the mechanical related skill-based that can be used toachieve the goals of amnesty programmes in Niger Delta?

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Table 4.1: Mean Responses on Mechanical Skill-Based Used to Achieve Amnesty Goals in Rivers State, Niger Delta

S/N	Item	Instructors			Beneficiary		
		X_1	SD_1	RMK	X_2	SD_2	RMK
1	Auto-Mechanic	3.11	0.72	Agree	3.47	0.61	Agree
2	Welding and Fabrication	2.89	0.60	Agree	3.08	0.84	Agree
3	Panel Beating	3.05	0.74	Agree	2.94	0.61	Agree
4	Auto-Electrician	3.64	1.02	Agree	3.40	0.55	Agree
5	Air Conditioning	3.77	0.63	Agree	3.11	0.74	Agree
6	Refrigeration	2.86	0.87	Agree	3.60	1.11	Agree
7	Heavy Duty Maintenance	3.01	0.54	Agree	2.94	0.75	Agree
	Average Mean/SD	**3.19**	**0.73**	**Agree**	**3.22**	**0.81**	**Agree**

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 4.1 shows instructors and amnesty beneficiary response on the mechanical related skill-based given to militants for the achievement of amnesty programmes in Rivers State, Niger Delta. Based on the mean responses obtained, instructors and beneficiary agree that all the listed mechanical related skill-based are used to achieve amnesty programmes among militantsin Niger Delta region. These mean values were accepted since they were equal or more than 2.50 which is the acceptable mean.

Research Question 2: What are the electrical/electronic related skill-based that can be usedto achieve the goals of amnesty programmes in Niger Delta?

Table 4.2: Mean Responses on Electrical/Electronic Skill-Based Used to Achieve Amnesty Goals in Rivers State, Niger Delta

S/N	Item	Instructors			Beneficiary		
		X_1	SD_1	RMK	X_2	SD_2	RMK
8	Electrical installation	3.55	0.67	Agree	3.09	0.61	Agree
9	Cable installation	3.05	1.11	Agree	3.47	0.94	Agree
10	Air Conditioning	2.71	1.01	Agree	3.61	0.57	Agree
11	GSM Repairs	3.62	0.84	Agree	3.33	0.65	Agree
12	CCTV installation	3.41	0.53	Agree	3.40	1.11	Agree
13	Instrumentation	3.82	0.63	Agree	3.70	0.84	Agree
14	Electronic Repairs	3.07	0.71	Agree	3.12	0.73	Agree
	Average Mean/SD	**3.32**	**0.79**	**Agree**	**3.39**	**0.74**	**Agree**

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 4.2 shows instructors and amnesty beneficiary response on the electrical/electronic related skill-based given to militants for the achievement of amnesty programmes in Rivers State, Niger Delta. Based on the mean responses obtained, instructors and beneficiary agree that all the listed electrical/electronic related skill-based are used to achieve amnesty programmes

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among militants in Niger Delta region. These mean values were accepted since they were equal or more than 2.50 which is the acceptable mean.

Research Question 3: What is the building related skill-Based that can be used to achievethe goals of amnesty programmes in Niger Delta?

Table 4.3: Mean Responses on Building Skill-Based Used to Achieve Amnesty Goals inRivers State, Niger Delta

S/N	Item	Instructors			Beneficiary		
		X_1	SD_1	RMK	X_2	SD_2	RMK
15	Carpentry and Joinery	3.88	0.68	Agree	3.10	0.74	Agree
16	Furniture Making	3.14	0.74	Agree	3.48	0.69	Agree
17	Scaffolding	3.72	1.01	Agree	3.29	1.11	Agree
18	Plumbing and pipefitting	3.08	0.58	Agree	3.46	0.56	Agree
19	Bricks Moulding	3.24	0.77	Agree	3.14	0.94	Agree
20	Interlocking	3.03	1.01	Agree	3.02	0.60	Agree
21	Tilling	3.17	0.66	Agree	3.14	0.71	Agree
	Average Mean/SD	**3.32**	**0.78**	**Agree**	**3.23**	**0.76**	**Agree**

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 4.3 shows instructors and amnesty beneficiary response on the building related skill-based given to militants for the achievement of amnesty programmes in Rivers State, Niger Delta. Based on the mean responses obtained, instructors and beneficiary agree that all the listed electrical/electronic related skill-based are used to achieve amnesty programmes among militants in Niger Delta region. These mean values were accepted since they were equal or more than 2.50 which is the acceptable mean.

Hypothesis 1
There is no significance difference in the mean response of training instructors and amnesty beneficiaries on how mechanical related skill-based can be used to achieve the goals of amnesty programmes in Niger Delta.

Table 4.4: z-Test for Responses on How Mechanical Skill-Based Programmes AchieveAmnesty Goals in Niger Delta

Categories	X	SD	N	df	z-cal	z-crit	Remark
Instructors	3.19	0.73	67				
				669	-1.31	1.96	Accepted
Beneficiaries	3.22	0.81	604				

Table 4.4 shows that instructors had mean and standard deviation score of 3.19 and 0.73 while beneficiaries had mean and standard deviation scores of 3.22 and 0.81 respectively. The z-cal value was -1.31, while the z-crit was 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance for two tailed test. This result shows that z-cal was less than z-crit, which means that the null hypothesis was accepted. Thus, there was no significant difference in the mean response of training instructors and amnesty beneficiaries on how mechanical related skill-based can be used to achieve the goals of

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amnesty programmes in Niger Delta.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significance difference in the mean response of training instructors and amnesty beneficiaries on how electrical/electronic related skill-based can be used to achieve the goals of amnesty programmes in Niger Delta.

Table 4.5: z-Test for Responses on How Electrical/Electronic Skill-Based ProgrammesAchieve Amnesty Goals in Niger Delta

Categories	X	SD	N	df	zcal	zcrit	Remark
Instructors	3.22	0.79	67				
				669	-1.14	1.96	Accepted
Beneficiaries	3.39	0.74	604				

Field Survey, 2021

Table 4.5 shows that instructors had mean and standard deviation score of 3.22 and 0.79 while beneficiaries had mean and standard deviation scores of 3.39 and 0.74 respectively. The z-cal value was -1.14, while the z-crit was 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance for two tailed test. This result shows that z-cal was less than z-crit, which means that the null hypothesis was accepted. Thus, there was no significant difference in the mean response of training instructors and amnesty beneficiaries on how electrical/electronic related skill-based can be used to achieve the goals of amnesty programmes in Niger Delta.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significance difference in the mean response of training instructors and amnesty beneficiaries on how building related skill-based can be used to achieve the goals of amnesty programmes in Niger Delta.

Table 4.6: z-Test for Responses on How Building Skill-Based Programmes Achieve Amnesty Goals in Niger Delta

Categories	X	SD	N	df	z-cal	zcrit	Remark
Instructors	3.32	0.78	67				
				669	0.86	1.96	Accepted
Beneficiaries	3.23	0.76	604				

Table 4.6 shows that instructors had mean and standard deviation score of 3.32 and 0.78 while beneficiaries had mean and standard deviation scores of 3.23 and 0.76 respectively. The z-cal value was 0.86, while the z-crit was 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance for two tailed test. This result shows that z-cal was less than z-crit, which means that the null hypothesis was accepted. Thus, there was no significant difference in the mean response of training instructors and amnesty beneficiaries on how building related skill-based can be used to achieve the goals of amnesty programmes in Niger Delta.

4. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Result from Table 4.1 reveals that instructors and amnesty beneficiary response on the

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mechanical related skill-based given to militants for the achievement of amnesty programmesin Rivers State, Niger Delta. The result shows that mechanical related skill-based such as Auto-Mechanic, Welding and Fabrication, Panel Beating, Auto-Electrician, Air Conditioning, Refrigeration and Heavy-Duty Maintenance are used to achieve amnesty programmes among militants in Niger Delta region. The findings of this study agree with that of Gumbari (2009) as declared that skills acquisition in areas like heavy duty driving and repairs, servicing of air condition and refrigerator, welding and fabrication are the key in the fight for the elimination of hunger and poverty, reduction or elimination of joblessness in the society and reduction of crime such as militant activities through effective engagement of youths. Persons with relevant skills will be fully engaged in a society like ours where opportunities are many and waiting for the prepared to take them. Such engagements will not only provide them with the basic needs of life but will in turn provide job for others.

Result from Table 4.2 reveals that instructors and amnesty beneficiary response on the electrical/electronic related skill-based given to militants for the achievement of amnesty programmes in Rivers State, Niger Delta. The result shows that electrical/electronic related skill-based such as Electrical installation, Cable installation, Air conditioning, GSM repairs, CCTV installation and instrumentation are used to achieve amnesty programmes among militants in Niger Delta region. The findings of this study agree with that of Pallas (2010) that studied the relationship between vocational activities and psychological maladjustment among persons in correctional centres in Nigeria and found that vocational skill such as electrical instrumentation, electrical installation, hair making, furniture making and metal works/fabrications and others were extended to these militants in correctional centres in Nigerian for rehabilitation.

Result from Table 4.3 reveals that instructors and amnesty beneficiary response on the building related skill-based given to militants for the achievement of amnesty programmes in Rivers State, Niger Delta. The result shows that building related skill-based such as Carpentry and Joinery, Furniture Making, Scaffolding, Plumbing and pipefitting are used to achieve amnesty programmes among militants in Niger Delta region. The findings of this study agree with thatof Ogunleye (2014) that carried out a research on the perceived contributions of vocational skills acquisition to militants who participated in amnesty programmes and found that amnesty beneficiaries in vocational activities were exposed to vocational skills in order to rehabilitate them for a better choice of employment.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was deduced that vocational/technical skills such as auto-mechanics, welding and fabrication, scaffolding, carpentry, plumbing and pipe fitting, electrical installation, and others were extended to militants in Rivers State for the purpose of achieving amnesty goals. These skills played a very important role in rehabilitating militants such that they could easily socialize with others, shun social vices; belong to professional associations, among others.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings the following recommendations were made;

1. Crime offenders should be rehabilitated with vocational skills such as auto-mechanic

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technology, welding and fabrication, boat building, agriculture and others. This will help in diverting the interest of youths from crime to becoming responsible citizens.

2. At least three (3) world class vocational/technical training centers should be built in each senatorial zone in Rivers State to help train youths that can compete with youths outside the country, hence developing the state technologically.
3. Every unemployed youth in Rivers State should be subjected to a compulsory vocational/technical training in order to engage youth thereby making them to be self-reliant which will in turn reduce the level insecurity in the state.

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