

Amnesty programme and skills training among ex-militants in Nigeria

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Sequel to the realisation that youths champion violence and militancy in the Niger Delta Region, and the resolution of Umar Musa Yar'Aduas' government to end insecurity, militancy, and youth restiveness in the region, the amnesty programme was declared, with skills training as its major component. This study examined the relationship between amnesty programmes and skills training among ex-militants in the Niger Delta Region, Nigeria. The study used a cross-sectional survey research design. Questionnaires were distributed to 1152 participants purposively selected from communities in Rivers, Delta, and Bayelsa states. Elicited data were analysed using a simple linear statistical tool. The findings of the study reveal that amnesty programmes significantly enabled ex-militant to acquired skills in pipeline installation and repairs. It also shows that amnesty programmes have a positive impact on the ex-militant acquisition of information technology skills. Further result indicates that there is a significant relationship between amnesty programmes and ex-militant acquisition of automobile servicing skills. The study, therefore, concluded on the need for beneficiaries of the amnesty skills training to be supervised by experts in their field and should be provided with professional advice that would help build their confidence in their chosen career .

Keywords: amnesty programmes, skills training, pipeline installation and repairs, automobile servicing, information technology, ex-militants

The Niger Delta Region has suffered from incessant conflicts, violence, militancy, and insecurity, as a result of the attitude of multinational oil companies and government inability to resolve developmental and environmental issues in the region. These unresolved developmental and ecological problems gave rise to widespread poverty, hunger, high illiteracy level, malnutrition, water-borne diseases, and high mortality rate (Agba & Ushie, 2009; Agba, & Ushie, Basse, & Agba,

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1. Dr. A. O. Agba, conceived the research topic, with the assistance of other authors developed the outline and the content of the paper.
2. John Thompson Okpa, developed the methodology, the instrument used for data collection and analysed data gathered from the field
3. Ogar, James Ajor, contributed to the full development of the paper

2009; Kuku, 2012; Iwuoha, 2012). The attitude of successive government as well as the activities of the International Oil Companies (IOCs) worsened the living condition of the people in the region, further aggravate the situation leading to what the Niger Delta people terms the struggle (Ajibola, 2015). The "struggle" exuded because of the exploitation and perceived injustice people encounter over the activities of oil companies in the region (Kuku, 2012; Isumonah, 2003; Ajibola, 2015; Ogbogbo, 2005). The "struggle" included clashes between government agencies like security operatives and multinational oil companies. The aggrieved ex-combatants approached the "struggle" with disagreements, civil unrest, violence, dialogue, militancy, kidnapping, insurgency, speculation, opportunistic criminality, and deception/misinformation, and the barricading of the main entrance to oil sites, rallies, obstructing digging activities, obstruction of working equipment entering or from being used in the site, blocking entry roads from being presented to potential investors, picketing of offending oil companies, obstructing pipeline construction and de-oiling exercises (Moffa, 2014, Agba, Ocheni & Nkpoyen, 2014; Ajibola, 2015; Kuku, 2012).

Sequel to the realisation that youths champion militancy and violence in the Niger Delta Region, and the resolution of Umar Musa Yar'Aduas' government to end militancy, insecurity and youth restiveness in the region, the amnesty programme was declared, as the required roadmap to restore peace to the troubled Niger Delta Region (Okonofua, 2013; Ajodo-Adebanjoko, 2106). Concisely, the amnesty programme was envisioned as a channel for addressing age-long security crisis such as frequent kidnapping and hostage-taking of oil workers, and attacks on critical oil installations (Agba, Agba, Ushie, & Akwara, 2009). The programmes outlined in the Presidential Amnesty Project (PAP) is grouped into four independent components, namely, the Demobilisation, Disarmament, and Reintegration (DDR), environmental, infrastructural, and petroleum components (Ajodo-Adebanjoko & Takim, 2013, Ejovi & Sunday Ebie, 2013). The DDR framework is fundamentally focused on de-radicalisation, retrieval of illegal arms from the ex-agitators and empowering the aggrieved ex-fighters in the region with relevant skills set that will aid their reintegration back to the society (Sheriff, Sadeeque & Farouq, 2014). As a part of a holistic medium and long-term human capacity development strategy, the ex-combatants were trained in diverse skills such as scaffolding, deep-sea welding, pipeline welding, automobile repairs, operation of earthmoving equipment, diving and seamanship, information technology among others in different parts of the globe as an alternative avenue of wealth creation (Agba, Agba, Okoro, & Agba, 2010). According to Ajibola (2015), introducing skill training to ex-militants is a significant tool at transforming the major elements to the conflict in the Niger Delta region. He maintained that this ideology had accomplished some degree of success as militancy and violence have enormously decreased in the region.

Many studies have examined a different aspect of the amnesty programme, but fail to examine the relationship between amnesty programmes and skill training among ex-militants in the Niger Delta Region, Nigeria. This research aimed to provide an empirical explanation of the relationship that exists between amnesty programme and skill training among ex-militants in the Niger Delta Region, Nigeria, as well as to fill such a gap in the literature. Three research hypotheses were tested in this study. They are: amnesty programmes are less likely to expose ex-militant to pipeline installation and repairs skills, there is no significant relationship between amnesty programmes and ex-militant acquisition of information technology skills and there is no significant relationship between amnesty programmes and ex-militant acquisition of automobile servicing skills.

Literature review

The distorted development pattern in Niger Delta Region has been sufficiently reported in extant literature (Osaghae, 1994; Ekiyor, 2001; Albert, 2011; Dukor, 2003; Osuoka, 2003; Menegbon, 2003; Ogundiya, 2011; Ojo, 2015). The region despite having a significant portion of the nation's wealth is characterised by widespread and institutionalised poverty, manifesting in the form of malnutrition, endemic hunger, poor health, general lack of access to suitable accommodation, formal education, and a devastating environmental degradation. The unimaginable violence that has invariably constituted a perennial problem has done more harm than good to the region. Umar, Othman, and Miao (2017) have specifically criticised the profound crude oil spillage through pipeline vandalism in the region. Increasing reports of pipeline vandalism by hoodlums in the creeks of the Niger Delta Region have substantial consequences on government revenues and oil companies operating in the region. At the peak of the Niger-Delta militancy evolution, statistics show that the country loosed about 300,000 barrels of oil daily due to the vandalisation of pipelines in the region. This has brought about grievous environmental and socioeconomic conditions plaguing the region with serious consequences for human lives and the eco-system. Incessant destruction of oils channels is worrisome because of its harmful environmental consequences (NNPC, 2013).

Odalonu and Obani (2018) reported that the deleterious activities of ex-agitators in the region had severe consequences on the socioeconomic and political sectors of the country. According to Awojobi (2014) "the bombings of oil installations and gas pipelines, killings of human potentials necessary for sustainable development, kidnappings of expatriates and the destruction of private and government properties, and other sources of revenue to the state and federal governments have impacted negatively on the Nigerian economy". However, the pardon granted to the ex-combatants has not been able to translate to peace and security, as repeated cases of hostage-taking and kidnapping as well as oil theft continue to rampage the insecurity problem of the region (Okpa & Ekong, 2017).

A report by UNDP (2006) revealed the ineptitude, misappropriation, and corruption that characterised government agencies (NDDC, OMPADEC) setup to drive development in the region. Previous research has highlighted the relationship between weak government institutions and socioeconomic development (Dzhumashev, 2014; Al-Kasim, Søreide, & Williams, 2013; Ebingha, Eni, Okpa, 2019; Okpa & Ekong, 2017). Similarly, d'Agostino, Dunne, and Pieroni (2016) contended that an increase in government expenditure and poor development in the Niger Delta Region is associated with corruption and misappropriation. This is evident from the amount of yearly budgetary allocation given to agencies like NDDC, OMPADEC, to transform the Niger Delta Region. Renewed threats from youths in this region is an indication that these agencies, due to corruption activities, have been unsuccessful in delivering governments' developmental efforts. This has fuelled the vandalisation of pipelines, sea piracy, kidnapping and hostage-taking in the region (Ukwayi & Okpa, 2017; Okpa & Ukwayi, 2017). Eventually, this turns to a major source of employment for many especially young people and some aggrieved local chiefs in the region. The desires for accomplishing significant development through the provision of infrastructures and protecting the eco-system lacks due to weak institutions.

The people of Niger Delta have persevered through a long torment of socioeconomic and political foul play over the oil asset in their locale. Abegunde (2013) observes that the natural resources, which originally was intended to be a blessing have become a curse with attendant consequences such as oil spillage, unemployment, deprivation, hunger, insecurity, militancy and abject poverty. The problem in the region depicts the relationship between corruption,

misappropriation and development. The indisputable reality is that both the Nigeria government and the global oil organisations were careless for a long time about the plight of the people in this region (Efeturi, 2016).

To further strengthened the argument of this paper and situate it within an existing theoretical framework, the paper adopts empowerment theory. The theory championed by Solomon (1976) argued that certain factors such as personal, interpersonal, and environmental resources interact in every human society to bring about increase and improve the skills, knowledge and motivation of people to achieve social goals. The theory observed that individuals will remain helpless and dependent when they are denied adequate access to personal, interpersonal and environmental resources. This made Solomon argue that denial of access to resources needed for good health, sources of learning and interpersonal skills and valued social roles produces powerlessness and undermine the competent functioning of group or individuals. This theory is very important to this study because Niger Delta Regions have been marginalized and have suffered untold hardship in the hands of government and multi-national corporations. The Region would have been substantially developed if the three interactive forces highlighted by the empowerment theorist have been put in place by the political elites and multi-national oil companies. However, the belated realization of government to enhance the well-being of the people by providing basic social amenities and empowering ex-agitators with relevant skill acquisition programmes addressed the problem of insecurity and militancy in the region but not the development issues.

Empowerment theorist provided empirically established strategies through which the well-being of marginalised people can be enhanced and inequity achieved in society. The emphasis of the theory is on improving the status of the marginalized and the equipping them through capacity building, awareness building and skill development. For Batliwala (1994) every empowerment programme should concentrate on access to assets, intellectual exposure and ideology principle. An important component of the physical assets is capital, land, water, forest, and labour. Knowledge, information, and ideas are an integral component of the intellectual exposure while control over ideology indicates the ability to generate, propagate, sustain, and institutionalize specific sets of beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviour. According to Batliwala, these can be achieved by providing skills, cash empowerment, training, and provision of soft loans. The process of empowerment must thus address all relevant structures and sources of power.

Methods

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. This design is considered appropriate because it can satisfactorily and precisely gather necessary data within a given timeframe. Cross-sectional survey design, according to Lavrakas (2008), Ipole, Agba, and Okpa (2018) is apt in studying the behavioural pattern of a given population based on their attitude, knowledge, opinion and perception concerning a given social issue. The Niger Delta Region which is the study area is made up of nine (9) subnational, they include, Akwa-Ibom, Rivers, Delta, Bayelsa, Edo, and Cross River in the South-South geopolitical zone. Imo, Abia and Ondo from the South-East and South-West geopolitical respectively. The number of states that make up the Niger Delta was originally three (3), namely Delta, Rivers and Bayelsa. The number was increased from three (3) to nine (9) in 2000 by the then president of Nigeria because of the oil-producing states of the additional six (6) states. The Niger Delta Region occupies about 70,000kmsq of Nigeria landmass. This implies that 7.5% of land in Nigeria is located in the region. Brief profile of core states that make up the Niger Delta Region are discussed as follows:

Akwa-Ibom State: The state is named after the Qua Iboe River. It is a coastal state situated at the South-Southern part of Nigeria. The state was carved out of Cross River State in the year 1987, formerly commission by the then General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida Administration. It has a population of over 5 million people. The states are currently awarded the country's largest oil and gas producer. The state is bordered in the South by the Atlantic Ocean, in the west by Abia State and Rivers State, and in the east by Cross River State. It lies between longitudes 7°25'1 and 8°25'1E and latitudes 4°32'1 and 5°33'1N. The people of Akwa Ibom State are culturally homogenous with a shared identity. Ibibio, Annang and Oron constitute the three major ethnic extractions in the state. Other well-recognised subgroups in the state are Ibenu, Eket, Andonis, and Itu-Mbonuso. The people of the state share similar taboos, norms, traditions and customs. Folkways of the people of Akwa Ibom varies from one ethnic group to the other; however, their operational, cultural norms are the same.

Delta State: The state was created on 27 August, 1991. It lies between latitudes 5°00' and 6°00'N and longitudes 5°00' and 6°45'E. The state has about 122km coastline bordered by the Bight of Benin on the Atlantic Ocean in the south-west and South. It has a landmass of about 18,050km, of which about 60 per cent island while the rest is swampy and waterlogged. It is bordered to the north-west by Ondo and Edo States, to the north-east by Anambra and Imo States, and the south-east by Bayelsa and Rivers States. The state is the second-largest oil-producing state and home to one of the functional refineries in Nigeria.

Rivers State: The state is blessed with a large deposit of crude oil, making it the third-largest oil-producing state in Nigeria. The state is a major oil refining location in Nigeria with two functional refineries cited in the state capital. The military Decree of 27 May 1967 gave birth to the creation of the state. It is bordered to the North by Imo and Anambra States, to the West by Bayelsa and Delta States, and to the East by Abia and Akwa Ibom States. The state is renowned by the presence of tropical rain forest, mangrove swamps and river lines. Rivers State lies on the recent coastal plain of the eastern Niger Delta with a very diverse ethnic composition.

Bayelsa State: The state is the first Nigerian state where a large quantity of oil was discovered. Although it was the first to discover oil, it, however, ranked fourth in the oil producer scale in Nigeria with a contribution of over 30% of oil production. The state was carved out of the old Rivers State on 1 October 1996. Currently, the state is said to have a population of over 1.9 million people. Bayelsa State lies between longitudes 05°22'W and 06°45'E and latitudes 04°15'N, 05°23'S. It is bordered in the east by Rivers State, in the north with Delta State, and the Atlantic Ocean at the West and South. Izon, Nembe, Ogbia and Epie-Atissa are the four defined ethnic identities of the state. The people of Bayelsa state are predominant fishermen, farmer, palm oil millers, palm wine tappers etc.

The population of the study comprises of respondents residing in the Niger Delta Region, Nigeria. The population consist of respondents aged 18 years and above. The study adopted a multi-stage sampling technique. The sample size for this study consists of one thousand two hundred (1200) respondents purposively drawn from three (3) states in the Niger Delta Region, Nigeria. Thirty-two (32) respondents were selected from each of the twelve (12) communities to make up the sample size of 1200 respondents. Using a 32-item questionnaire to collect quantitative data, while the elicited data were analysed using simple linear regression analysis.

Results

A total of 1152 returned questionnaire out of the 1,200 questionnaires administered, was used in the analysis of the stated objectives of the study. Retrieved data were statistically coded and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.

Table 1

Respondents' demographic data

Variable	Category	N	Per cent (%)
Sex	Male	768	67.00
	Female	384	33.00
	Total	1152	100
Age	Below 20 years	54	5.00
	20 – 24 years	60	5.00
	25 – 29 years	123	11.00
	30 – 34 years	399	35.00
	35 – 39 years	453	39.00
	40 years and above	63	5.00
	Total	1152	100
Level of education	No formal Education	351	31.00
	Primary education	459	41.00
	Secondary education	243	21.00
	Tertiary education	75	7.00
	Total	1152	100
Occupation	Farming	603	52.00
	Civil servant/ public servant	183	16.00
	Business/ Self-employment	225	20.00
	Others	141	12.00
	Total	1152	100
Marital status	Single	501	44.00
	Currently married	336	29.00
	Divorced/separated	117	15.00
	Widow	84	7.00
	Widower	54	5.00
Total	1152	100	
Religion Affiliation	Christianity	1092	95.00
	Islam	18	1.00
	African Traditional Religion	42	4.00
	Total	1152	100

Source: Field survey, 2019

Test of hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

Amnesty programmes are less likely to enable ex-militant to acquire pipeline installation and repairs skills. The hypothesis was tested using simple linear regression at .05 alpha level with the outcome presented in table 2. The result showed a striking rise in the calculated correlation-value of 0.218 as compared to the critical correlation value (r) of .001, at .05 alpha level; therefore, this outcome rejected the null hypothesis. The implication, therefore, is that amnesty programmes enable

ex-militant to acquire pipeline installation and repairs skills. Furthermore, showing from the table, the R^2 -value of .067 describes that a total of 67% variance is accounted for by the independent factor (amnesty programmes). Again, the regression ANOVA is significant, showing that there was a significant linear association (contribution) of the predicting variable (amnesty programmes) and acquisition of pipeline installation and repairs skills given by the F-ratio (1, 1150) = 14.236; $p < 0.05$. The shrinkage in the adjusted R^2 (0.66) indicates that the result could be generalised on the population. Based on this result, it was concluded that amnesty programmes enable ex-militant to acquire pipeline installation and repairs skills.

Table 2

Summary simple linear regression analysis of amnesty programmes and ex-militant ability to acquire pipeline installation and repairs skills.

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation
Amnesty programmes	11.2331	3.11273
Acquisition of pipeline installation and repairs skills	24.7861	8.26809

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	F	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig
Regression	203.928	1	14.236	.218 ^a	.067	.066	.001*
Residual	31380.246	1150					
Total	31584.173	1151					

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between amnesty programmes and ex-militant acquisition of information technology skills. The hypothesis was tested using simple linear regression at .05 alpha level with the outcome presented in table 3. The outcome showed a striking rise in the calculated correlation-value (r) of 0.281 as compared to the critical correlation value (r) of .001, at 0.05 alpha level; therefore, this outcome rejected the null hypothesis. The implication, therefore, is that the amnesty programmes enable ex-militant to acquire information technology skills. Furthermore, showing from the table, the R^2 -value of .077 describes that a total of 77% variance is accounted for by the independent variable (amnesty programmes). Again, the regression ANOVA is significant, showing that there was a significant linear association (contribution) of the predicting variable (amnesty programmes) and acquisition of information technology skills given by the F-ratio (1, 1150) = 19.559; $p < .05$. The shrinkage in the adjusted R^2 (0.77) indicates that the result could be generalised on the population. In light of this outcome, it was presumed that amnesty programmes enable ex-militants acquisition of information technology skills.

Table 3

Summary simple linear regression analysis of the relationship between amnesty programmes and ex-militant acquisition of information technology skills

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation					
Amnesty programmes	12.3815	4.10366					
Ex-militant acquisition of information technology skills	24.7861	8.26809					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	F	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig
Regression	2499.231	1	19.559	.281 ^a	.077	.076	.000 ^a
Residual	29084.942	1150					
Total	31584.173	1151					

Hypothesis 3

Amnesty programmes have no significant relationship with ex-militant acquisition of automobile servicing skills. The hypothesis was tested using simple linear regression at .05 alpha level with the outcome presented in table 4. The outcome showed a striking rise in the calculated correlation-value of 0.227 as compared to the critical correlation value (r) of .000^a, at 0.05 alpha level; therefore, this outcome rejected the null hypothesis. The implication, therefore, is that the amnesty programmes enable ex-militant to acquire automobile servicing skills. Furthermore, showing from the table, the R^2 -value of .069 describes that a total of 69% variance is accounted for by the independent variable (amnesty programmes). Again, the regression ANOVA is significant, showing that there was a significant linear association (contribution) of the predicting variable (amnesty programmes) and acquisition of information technology skills given by the F-ratio (1, 1150) = 14.958; $p < .05$. The shrinkage in the adjusted R^2 (0.68) indicates that the result could be generalised on the population. In light of this outcome, it was presumed that there is a significant relationship between amnesty programmes and ex-militant acquisition of automobile servicing skills.

Table 4

Summary of simple linear regression analysis on the relationship between amnesty programmes and ex-militant acquisition of automobile servicing skills

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation					
Amnesty programmes	14.3873	5.22361					
Ex-militant acquisition of automobile servicing skills	24.7861	8.26809					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	F	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig
Regression	1231.612	1	14.958	.227 ^a	.069	.068	.000 ^a
Residual	30352.562	1150					
Total	31584.173	1151					

Discussion of findings

In line with the general objective of this study which is to examine the relationship between amnesty programmes and skill training among ex-agitators in Niger Delta Region, Nigeria, the study found that majority of the respondents are beneficiaries of amnesty programmes such as pipeline installation and repairs training. The ex-agitators who are beneficiaries of this skill-set revealed that amnesty created a generous opportunity for them to acquire skills, experience and expert knowledge on different techniques relating to the installation and repair of oil pipelines. The study revealed that the training and exposure of this ex-war lord on pipeline installation and repairs affected their perception of issues relating to pipeline matters. They perceive pipelines as assets that need to be protected and maintained for optimum performance. The study further revealed that ex-agitators with pipeline installation and repairs skills are employed in most of the multinational oil companies operating in the region to monitor pipelines in order to ensure the structural integrity and the operability of the pipeline. The findings of the study support the main thesis of empowerment theory, which proposes strategies of reducing the marginalization and inequity in human society. It demands for capacity building, awareness building and skill development to improve the status of the marginalized. This is hallmark of the amnesty programme in the Niger Delta Region. Batliwala (1994) in support of empowerment theory argues that empowerment should centre on the control over material assets, intellectual resources and ideology. The material asset which control can be exercised may be physical, human, or financial such as land, water, forest, people's bodies and labour, money and access to money. Intellectual resources include knowledge, information, and ideas. Control over ideology signifies the ability to generate, propagate, sustain, and institutionalize specific sets of beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviour, virtually determining how people perceive and function within given socio-economic and political environment. According to Batliwala, these can be achieved by providing skills, cash empowerment, training, and provision of soft loans. The process of empowerment must thus address all relevant structures and sources of power

Findings from the study further suggest that there is a significant relationship between amnesty programmes and ex-militant acquisition of information technology skills. Most of the ex-agitators who opted for this skill training, did so because of the digital dynamics of today's world, where most industries including oil firms rely on data and software programmes in their day-to-day interactions. Similarly, the desire to create and fix both gadgets and codes as well as a passion for tech-related matters explains why some ex-militants choose information technology as their desired skills. Some of the benefits derived for acquiring these skills include securing the opportunity to work for some of the most famous oil firms in their ICT department. In the same vein, ex-agitators have used their knowledge of information technology to support various community projects in their locality. This corroborated earlier findings by Cockburn (2005) that information and communication technologies can be used to increase the participation of young people service delivery through exercising the ability in contributing to decisions, better access to information, and participating in collective action.

Findings from this study indicate that there is a significant relationship between amnesty programmes and ex-militant acquisition of automobile servicing skills. However, the study revealed that the number of ex-agitator who opted for this skill training is relatively high when compared to the choice of other skill training. The low patronage of this skill is an occasion by the peoples' perception of the profession as being difficult and attracts low economic gains. While, few of the ex-agitators who were trained in this profession specialised in identifying and solving engineering problems in cars, motorbikes and trucks.

The results obtained from the field confirmed that ex-agitators were trained in various skill programmes such as computer training, repairs of pipelines, automobile, catering services, among others. A skill learnt by ex-militants changed their living conditions by providing them with specific knowledge that makes them competitive in various fields. This in no small measure has help discourage young people from engaging in agitation, crime and other social vices, because their mind is activated towards positive activities.

The postulation of structural functionalism theory appears to be the tandem with the findings of this study. The basic tenets of the theory provide an explicit explanation of how structural functionalist theory is relevant to this study. It is clear that it has provided adequate theoretical guidance to the study. Accordingly, the theory has emphasized that the society is a system made up of interdependent and interrelated parts which together form a whole and that the sub-system works together harmoniously for social existence of the entire system which eventually enables the needs of the system to be met in order to prevent the system from dying (Iwarimie-Jaja, 2013). Indeed, the Amnesty programme have been seen and describe by scholars (Ikoh & Ukpong, 2013; Ekumaoko, 2013; Eke, 2014; Imongan & Ikelegbe, 2016) as not only beneficial but indispensable to the both individual and societal development. In line with the functionalist assumptions, the contributions of Amnesty programme is considered functional in the sense that they empower militants with relevant skill that are basic to the reduction of poverty as well as develop the well-being of this ex-militants.

Conclusion and recommendations

The study revealed the relationship between amnesty programmes and skill training among ex-militant in Niger Delta Region, Nigeria. It showed that granting amnesty to ex-agitators exposed them to a new approach of wealth creation, which is more enduring and sustainable. The study, therefore, concluded that amnesty programmes significantly enabled ex-militant to acquired skills in pipeline installation and repairs. The study further found that there is a significant relationship between amnesty programmes and ex-militant acquisition of information technology skills. The study finally reported that there is a significant relationship between amnesty programmes and ex-militant acquisition of automobile servicing skills. The study, therefore, concluded on the need for beneficiaries of the amnesty skills training should be supervised by experts in their field and should be provided with professional advice that would help build their confidence in their chosen career. Organisations milking the skills of these individuals should ensure constant upgrading and updating of these skills through in-house training and workshops. This training will boost staff capability to render better and improved services to the organisation.

Limitation and suggestion for further research

The major limitation of this study is that the study focuses only on three states, not the entire nine (9) states that makeup the Niger Delta Region, consequently data gleaned only relies on information gathered from respondents from the three selected states and supported by secondary sources such as internet-based materials, text books and journal articles. All the approaches used in data collection belong to the obtrusive measures which has its inherent flaws. Again, since respondents are selected from three states out of the nine states of the Niger Delta Region, caution should be applied in generalizing the findings of this study to other states in the Niger Delta Region.

Further research should be replicated in other states that makeup the Niger Delta Region for the purpose of ascertaining the impact of the amnesty programme on the general well-being of the ex-militants. It is also very important that further studies on the amnesty programme should examine some of the setback and challenges the programme encountered at various stages of implementation

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