

Impact of Technical and Vocational Education and Training in the Rehabilitation of Repentant Militants in Rivers State

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Abstract: The study investigated the impact of Technical/Vocational Education and Training in the rehabilitation of repentant militants in Rivers States. A descriptive survey design guided the study. A population of all repentant militants was adopted for the study. From this population, a sample size of 268 repentant militants which comprised 182 graduates and 86 non-graduates who benefitted from the Rivers State vocational training was sampled through snowball sampling technique. Three research questions were answered and two hypotheses were tested. The instrument for the study was partitioned into three sections, structured in the pattern of 5 point Likert rating scale of agreement. The instrument was faced and contents validated by two experts in the Department of Vocational and Technology Education in Rivers State University, Port-Harcourt. The reliability of the instrument was determined through Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient. The reliability coefficient achieved was 0.86. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions, while Z test statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study found among others that vocational/technical skills such as auto-mechanic, welding and fabrication, fishery, fashion designing, bead making and boat building were extended to repentant militants in Rivers State, and that acquisition of these skills makes it possible for repentant militants to socialize positively, belong to professional associations, shun social vices, start up new business, earn a living, and have steady source of income. More so, the study found that through the rehabilitation programme, repentant militants have peace of mind, personal safety, personal dignity, societal recognition and professional association recognition. It was recommended among others that the rehabilitation of crime offenders should be based on vocational/technical training and not payment of stipends, and that at least three (3) World class vocational/technical training centers should be built in each senatorial zone in Rivers State to help train youths who were granted amnesty.

Keywords: Education, Economic, Militants, Rehabilitation, Repentant, Social, Technical, Training and Vocation.

Introduction

Militancy is a phenomenon that has attracted the attention of researchers around the world. Basically, several definitions on militancy have been made. According to Osaghae, Ikelegbe, Olarinmoye and Okhonmina (2011), militancy is a combative and aggressive activism or engagement in struggles for identified cause. Also, Ajibola, Ebikefe and Awodiran (2014) defined militancy as the act of individuals, groups or parties displaying or engaging in violence, usually for a cause, whether religious, ideological, economic, political or social. Militancy could be said to be the act of fighting to achieve ones aim through violence or any other means that is against the norms of a community, state or nation.

The origin of militancy in Nigeria can be traced to the agitation of Isaac Jasper Adaka Boro of the Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF). Gilbert (2010) state that on 23 February 1966, Isaac Jasper Adaka Boro of the Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF) and his group of 159 youth, took up arms against the Nigerian state as a result of the injustice, marginalization, and political exclusion suffered by the Ijaws and other Niger Delta indigenes. In consonance with this, Olasupo (2013) opined that militant activities in Nigeria's Niger Delta are mostly motivated by frustration created as a result of long deprivation and political exclusion of Niger Deltan's. Consequently, several other armed groups were formed, such as, Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF), headed by Asari Dokubo, Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND), headed by Henry Okah, Niger Delta Vigilante (NDV), headed by Ateke Tom, among others. These groups recruited myriads of boys that served as militants. According to Preye and David (2010), a militant is a person involved in fighting a protest movement in the defence of a cause. Gilbert (2010) explained that Niger Delta militants fought fiercely for the control of bunkering territories and routes, leading to the death of several people, and carried out reprisal acts of vandalism against oil infrastructure. The militant's activities also affected the daily production of oil which in turn affected the economy of the nation.

Basically, it became imperative for Nigerian government to find a lasting solution to the militancy problem in Niger Delta region. It was for this reason that on 25th June, 2009, the late President, Alhaji Umaru Yar'Adua, in a nationwide broadcast declared amnesty for all militants who were engaged in all forms of

criminal practices including pipeline vandalism, illegal arm proliferation among others (Adebayo, 2010). Furthermore, Adebayo (2010) opined that at the end of the deadline, the federal government announced that approximately 20000 militants repented of their act and also accepted to be disengaged, de-radicalized, rehabilitated and reintegrated into the society. According to Aduma (2016), repentant militants in Rivers State were enrolled for rehabilitation programmes with a stipend of sixty five thousand naira per month.

The term “rehabilitation” according to Research Society of International Law (2014), is a process by which physical, psychological and social measures are enacted to restore rehabilitees to a state in which they no longer possess the desire or need to participate in activities or organizations associated with militancy. Therefore, rehabilitation of repentant militant can be defined as the process of transforming a militant who had laid down arm(s), to a state whereby he or she will no longer commit the crime he or she was accused of. Through the rehabilitation programme, repentant militants were trained in vocational skills through Technical and Vocational Education and Training

According to Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013), Technical and Vocational Education and Training is the comprehensive term referring to those aspects of the educational processes involving 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. In this context, Technical and Vocational Education and Training can be defined as that type of education that is systematically organized to train individuals to be practically oriented for paid or self-employment.

Ajokporise (2010) posits that Technical and Vocational Education and Training focuses on specific trades such as automobile repairs or mechanic, welding, plumbing, electrical craftsmanship, hair dressing, tailoring, barbing among others. In line with this, Nnaike (2013) opines that in four years, the amnesty scheme graduated 9,192 repentant militants from the training programme in various fields such as in electrical installation, carpentry, plumbing, welding and fabrications to mention amongst others.

Over the years, researchers have carried out research on the rehabilitation programme of crime offenders. For instance, Gototoh, Omukma and Nssaiuma (2011) found that prison inmate who participated in vocational/technical skill adjusted psychologically in prisons and after confinement. Omoni and Ijeh (2009) studied the perception of prison staff and the academic staff of College of Education, Agbor on the effect of qualitative and vocational education on prisoners as a panacea for their rehabilitation and integration into the society. It was observed that there was no significant relationship between prisoners’ rehabilitation and formal education. Also, Ndombi (2014) observed that the rehabilitation programs through TVET in prisons are not effective enough to reduce levels of recidivism in society to significant levels given the high levels of reoffending among ex-convicts.

However, Aduma (2016) stated that the main reason for rehabilitation was basically to re-orient the mindset of the militants, train them in schools or equip them with skills that will improve their wellbeing after reintegration. According to Scent (2014), there is a relationship between wellbeing and skills acquisition of ex-militants in Bayelsa State. However, with the recent trend of pipeline vandalism by militants in Delta and Bayelsa States, where militants were trained in vocational skills, some researchers have attributed the re-emergence of militancy to the fact that repentant militants can no longer put food on their tables. Therefore, it is expedient to investigate the relevance of this vocational/technical training given to repentant militants in Rivers State, which is a neighbouring state to Bayelsa and Delta States. Basically, the researcher decided to investigate the impact of Technical and Vocational Education and Training in the rehabilitation of repentant militants in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The study investigated the impact of Technical and Vocational Education and Training in the rehabilitation of repentant militants in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to;

- identify the vocational/technical skills extended to repentant militants in Rivers State.
- ascertain the impact of acquired vocational/technical skills on the socio-economic rehabilitation of repentant militants in Rivers State.
- find out the impact of the rehabilitation programmes on the general wellbeing of repentant militants in Rivers State.

Research Questions

1. What are the vocational/technical skills extended to repentant militants in Rivers state?
2. What is the impact of acquired vocational/technical skills on the socio-economic rehabilitation of repentant militants in Rivers State?
3. What is the impact of the rehabilitation programme on the general wellbeing of repentant militants in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

- H0₁** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of graduate and non-graduate repentant militants on the impact of acquired vocational/technical skills on the socio-economic rehabilitation of repentant militants in Rivers State.
- H0₂** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of graduate and non-graduate repentant militants on the impact of the rehabilitation programme on the general wellbeing of repentant militants in Rivers State.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design based on the fact that information was collected from large sample of repentant militants in Rivers State. Rivers State is a state in the southern part of Nigeria with a projected population of about seven million people (National Population Commission Office, 2016) and a host to multinational companies. The population of the study comprised all repentant militants who benefitted from the vocational training of the rehabilitation programme in Rivers State. From this population, a sample size of 268 repentant militants which comprised 182 graduates and 86 non-graduates was sampled through snowball sampling technique. The instrument that guided the study was “Repentant Militant Rehabilitation Survey Questionnaire” (RMRSQ) which was used to assess the rehabilitation and wellbeing of the repentant militants in Rivers State. This instrument was complemented with structured interview schedule for repentant militants who could not read or write. The questionnaire was partitioned into three sections that were structured in the pattern of Likert 5 point rating scale of agreement: Strongly Agree (SA-5), Agree (A-4), Undecided (U-3), Disagree (D-2) and Strongly Disagreed (SD-1). The instrument was faced and contents validated by two experts in the Department of Vocational and Technology Education in Rivers State University, Port-Harcourt. The reliability of the instrument was determined through Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient method. This was achieved through snowball sampling of 16 repentant militants in Rivers State who were not among the sample. The reliability coefficients achieved was 0.86. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions, while z-test statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses. Items with Mean values of 3.00 and above were accepted while Mean values less than 3.00 were rejected.

Results and Discussions

Research Question 1

What are the vocational/technical skills extended to repentant militants in Rivers state?

Table 1: Extended vocational/technical skills for rehabilitation of repentant militants

S/N	Variables	Graduate (182)		Non-graduate (86)			
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	GM	Remark
1	Auto mechanics	4.62	1.65	3.06	1.63	3.84	Accepted
2	Welding and fabrication	3.80	1.28	3.24	1.46	3.52	Accepted
3	Fishery	3.85	1.28	3.19	1.68	3.52	Accepted
4	Crop production	3.81	1.28	3.22	1.38	3.52	Accepted
5	Fashion design	3.82	1.16	3.67	1.43	3.75	Accepted
6	Plumbing and pipefitting	3.70	1.20	3.49	1.44	3.60	Accepted
7	Electrical installation	3.60	1.32	3.59	1.41	3.60	Accepted
8	Bead making	3.77	1.34	3.40	1.46	3.59	Accepted
9	Boat building	3.83	1.11	3.63	1.45	3.73	Accepted
10	Heavy duty maintenance	3.82	0.86	3.64	1.44	3.73	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2016 **SD (Standard Deviation)** **GM (Grand Mean)**

Table 1 showed that the listed vocational/technical skills such as; auto mechanics, welding and fabrication, fishery, crop production, fashion design, plumbing and pipefitting, electrical installation, bead making, boat building and heavy duty maintenance were skills extended to repentant militants in Rivers State. This finding is in line with Nnaike (2013) that in four years, the amnesty scheme graduated 9,192 repentant militants from the training skills programme in various fields such as in electrical installation, carpentry, plumbing, welding and fabrications to mention amongst others.

Research Question 2

What is the impact of acquired vocational/technical skills on the socio-economic economic rehabilitation of repentant militants in Rivers State?

Table 2: Impact of acquired vocational/technical skills on the socio-economic rehabilitation of repentant militants in Rivers State

S/N	Variables	Graduate (182)		Non-graduate (86)			Remark
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	GM	
1	Belonging to professional associations	4.04	1.16	4.24	1.17	4.14	Accepted
2	Shunning social vices	4.21	0.98	3.62	1.43	3.92	Accepted
3	Involvement in social development Strives	3.65	1.30	3.02	1.49	3.34	Accepted
4	Participation in civil society	3.97	1.05	3.59	1.41	3.78	Accepted
5	Being more responsible in the society	3.95	1.04	3.52	1.52	3.74	Accepted
6	Ability to vote and be voted for	3.76	1.19	3.43	1.33	3.60	Accepted
7	Ability to contribute to the development of the community	3.77	1.19	3.30	1.41	3.54	Accepted
8	Ability to start a new business	3.63	1.37	3.38	1.47	3.51	Accepted
9	Steady source of income	3.77	1.19	3.23	1.46	3.50	Accepted
10	Ability to earn a living	3.96	0.87	3.14	1.41	3.55	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2016 **SD (Standard Deviation)** **GM (Grand Mean)**

Table 2 showed respondent's opinion on the impact of acquired vocational/technical skills on the socio-economic rehabilitation of repentant militants in Rivers State. The grand mean responses of respondents showed agreement of respondents in the following variables as effects of acquired vocational/technical skills on the socio-economic rehabilitation of repentant militants in Rivers State; belonging to professional associations (4.14), shunning social vices (3.92), involvement in social development strive (3.34), participation in civil society (3.78), being more responsible in the society (3.74), ability to vote and be voted for (3.60), ability to contribute to the development of the community (3.54), ability to start a new business (3.51), steady source of income (3.50) and ability to earn a living (3.55). This finding is in agreement with Gototoh, Omukma and Nssaiuma (2011) that found that prison inmate who participated in vocational/technical skill adjusted psychologically in prisons and after confinement. On the contrary, this finding is in disagreement with Omoni and Ijeh (2009) that studied the perception of prison staff and the academic staff of College of Education, Agbor on the effect of qualitative and vocational education on prisoners as a panacea for their rehabilitation and integration into the society. It was observed that there was no significant relationship between prisoners' rehabilitation and formal education. Also, Ndombi (2014) observed that the rehabilitation programs through TVET in prisons are not effective enough to reduce levels of recidivism in society to significant levels given the high levels of reoffending among ex-convicts

Research Question 3

What is the impact of rehabilitation programme on the general wellbeing of repentant militants in Rivers State?

Table 3: Impact of rehabilitation programme on general wellbeing of repentant militants

S/N	Variables	Graduate (182)		Non-graduate (86)			Remark
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	GM	
1	Peace of mind	3.83	1.33	3.06	1.60	3.45	Accepted
2	Peaceful co-existence with others	3.87	1.14	3.21	1.49	3.54	Accepted
3	societal recognition	3.78	1.21	3.65	1.10	3.72	Accepted
4	Personal safety	3.99	1.19	3.81	1.46	3.90	Accepted
5	personal dignity	3.63	1.29	3.38	1.43	3.51	Accepted
6	Peaceful co-existence with the environment	3.71	1.11	3.28	1.50	3.50	Accepted
7	Competitiveness in business	3.64	1.20	3.51	1.37	3.58	Accepted
8	Recognition by professional bodies	4.21	0.98	3.62	1.43	3.92	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2016 **SD (Standard Deviation)** **GM (Grand Mean)**

Table 3 showed respondent's opinion on the impact of the rehabilitation programme on the general wellbeing of repentant militants in Rivers State. The grand mean responses of respondents showed agreement of respondents in the following variables as effects of rehabilitation programme on the general wellbeing of repentant militants in Rivers State; peace of mind (4.45), peaceful co-existence with others (3.54), peaceful co-existence with the environment (3.72), personal safety (3.90), personal dignity (3.51), societal recognition (3.50)

competitiveness in business (3.58) and recognition by professional bodies (3.92). This finding is in agreement with Scent (2014) that there is relationship between wellbeing and skills acquisition of ex-militants in Bayelsa State.

Null hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of graduate and non-graduate repentant militants on the impact of acquired vocational/technical skills on the socio-economic rehabilitation of repentant militants in Rivers State.

Table 4: Z-test responses of graduate and non-graduate repentant militants on the impact of acquired vocational/technical skills on the socio-economic rehabilitation of repentant militants in Rivers State

S/N	Variables	Graduate (182)		Non-graduate (86)				Remark
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	z-cal	z-crit	
1	Belonging to professional associations	4.04	1.16	4.24	1.17	1.30	1.96	NS
2	Shunning social vices	4.21	0.98	3.62	1.43	3.44	1.96	S
3	Involvement in social development strives	3.65	1.30	3.02	1.49	3.35	1.96	S
4	Participation in civil society	3.97	1.05	3.59	1.41	2.60	1.96	S
5	Being more responsible in the society	3.95	1.04	3.52	1.52	2.36	1.96	S
6	Ability to vote and be voted for	3.76	1.19	3.43	1.33	1.95	1.96	NS
7	Ability to contribute to the development of the community	3.77	1.19	3.30	1.41	2.66	1.96	S
8	Ability to start a new business	3.63	1.37	3.38	1.47	1.59	1.96	NS
9	Steady source of income	3.77	1.19	3.23	1.46	2.98	1.96	S
10	Ability to earn a living	3.96	0.87	3.14	1.41	4.94	1.96	S

Table 4 showed that items 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9 & 10 had their z-cal greater than z-crit (1.96) which means that there was significant difference in the mean responses of graduate and non-graduate repentant militants for items 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9 & 10. Therefore, the hypothesis earlier stated; there was no significant difference in the mean responses of graduate and non-graduate on the impact of acquired vocational/technical skills on socio-economic rehabilitation of repentant militants in Rivers State was not upheld for these items. On the other hand, items 1, 6 & 8 had their z-cal less than z-crit (1.96) which means that there was no significant difference in the mean responses of graduate and non-graduate repentant militants for items 1, 6 & 8. Therefore, the stated hypothesis; there was no significant difference in the mean responses of graduate and non-graduate on the impact of acquired vocational/technical skills on socio-economic rehabilitation of repentant militants in Rivers State was up held for these items.

Null hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of graduate and non-graduate repentant militants on the impact of social rehabilitation on general wellbeing of repentant militants in Rivers State.

Table 5: Z-test responses of graduate and non-graduate repentant militants on the impact of rehabilitation programme on general wellbeing of repentant militants in Rivers State

S/N	Variables	Graduate (182)		Non-graduate (86)				Remark
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	z-cal	z-crit	
1	Peace of mind	3.83	1.33	3.06	1.60	3.86	1.96	S
2	Peaceful co-existence with others	3.87	1.14	3.21	1.49	3.62	1.96	S
3	Peaceful co-existence with the environment	3.78	1.21	3.65	1.10	0.87	1.96	NS
4	Personal safety	3.99	1.19	3.81	1.46	0.99	1.96	NS
5	Personal dignity	3.63	1.29	3.38	1.43	1.37	1.96	NS
6	Societal recognition	3.71	1.11	3.28	1.50	2.36	1.96	S
7	Competitiveness in business	3.64	1.20	3.51	1.37	0.75	1.96	NS
8	Recognition by professional bodies	4.21	0.98	3.62	1.43	3.44	1.96	S

Table 4 showed that items 1, 2, 6 & 8 had their z-cal greater than z-crit (1.96) which means that there was significant difference in the mean responses of graduate and non-graduate repentant militants for items 1, 2, 6 & 8. Therefore, the hypothesis earlier stated; there was no significant difference in the mean responses of graduate and non-graduate repentant militants on impact of rehabilitation programme on general wellbeing of repentant militants in Rivers State, was not upheld for these items. On the other hand, items 3, 4, 5, 7, 9 & 10 had their z-cal less than z-crit (1.96) which means that there was no significant difference in the mean responses of graduate and non-graduate repentant militants for items 3, 4, 5, 7, 9 & 10. Therefore, the stated hypothesis; there was no significant difference in the mean responses of graduate and non-graduate repentant militants on impact of rehabilitation programme on general wellbeing of repentant militants in Rivers State, was up held for these items.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it was deduced that vocational/technical skills such as auto-mechanics, welding and fabrication, scaffolding, seafaring, fashion designing, carpentry, plumbing and pipefitting, electrical installation, fishery/aqua culture and others were extended to repentant militants in Rivers State for the purpose of rehabilitation. More so, the acquired vocational/technical skill by repentant militants in Rivers State made it possible for repentant militants to meet well-behaved friends, belong to professional association, relate with others, involve in social development strive and to shun social vices, among others who genuinely participated in the vocational training of the amnesty programme by Rivers State and Federal Government. Also, the rehabilitation of repentant militant through vocational/technical training has a positive impact on the wellbeing of repentant militants in Rivers State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings the following recommendations were made;

1. 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 repentant crime offenders 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 technologically with youths outside the country.
3. Every unemployed youth in Rivers State should be subjected to a compulsory vocational/technical training in order to equip them with relevant skills that can help put food on their table hence, reducing insecurity in the state.

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