

Vocational Skill Development and the Reduction of Insecurity in Niger-Delta Region of Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to relate vocational skill development to reduction of insecurity in Nigeria. To achieve this, two research questions were raised and two null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. A correlational survey design was adopted for the study. A researcher-structured questionnaire titled 'Vocational Skill Development and Reduction of Insecurity Questionnaire' (VOSDRINQ) was used for the study. The study made use of 102 vocational education graduates conducting their postgraduate studies in south-south Nigeria. A purposive sampling technique involving 102 vocational education graduates were used for the study. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to analyze the research questions and test the null hypotheses. It was discovered that graduates of Vocational Education who acquire skills agree that skill development relate significantly with reduction of insecurity in Niger-Delta. It was recommended among others that vocational training and skill development should be free for the youth at grass root level.

Keywords: Development, Niger Delta Region, Security, Vocational Skill

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I. INTRODUCTION

Vocational skill development has been linked to the reduction of unemployment according to researchers like Ukpo (2015), Bentley (2017), and Afo (2013) among others. Vocational skill is defined by Akpan (2017) as a level of skill that involves both the cognitive and psychomotive levels of domain which are concerned with the transmission of saleable skills that make the recipient employable and self-contented. The issue of self-contentment is the reason why recipient of vocational skill may not be involved in crime. Niger Delta has been a hot spot for different crimes until the Yar'Adua led administration introduced the amnesty for the criminals to drop arms and embrace peace.

Insecurity in the Niger Delta region in pre-amnesty region was quite bloody. It presented itself in the form of kidnapping, killing, gruesome murder of oil workers in the region. Benson (2015) opined that insecurity in the Niger-Delta was majorly kidnapping for ransom. The ransom payment was becoming a booming business that was really thriving in the region. The post-amnesty era of insecurity has been really a case of soft and armed robbery mostly in the creek, although, there are cases of reported kidnapping and killings. The Nigerian Police Force (NPF) in 2016 reported that it has lost 67 men only in July to insecurity in the Niger-Delta region. Recently, the spate of insecurity has been on the increase due to poor security architecture in the area. Utom (2018), James (2019) and Eton (2018) have reported the presence of soft crimes in the region. In a bid to

reduce the crime rate, the federal government and non-governmental agencies suggested that vocational skill development be given to the youths of the region.

Dandey (2014) opined that skill development can be seen as the process where individuals decide to be trained in skills that would lead to employment generation. Skill development has to do with getting acquainted with the basic skills required for employment generation. Somatic (2014) opined that once young people get developed in skill application and appreciation, it tends to help reduce insecurity because it is only believed that an idle man is a devil's workshop. Therefore, an idle man can be likened to a lazy man without any form of skill appreciation. Skills development can help reduce incidence of insecurity by providing avenues for the skilled manpower to be fully involved in actual practice of the skills which will help reduce incidence of insecurity.

Several aspects of vocational skill development have been on-going either in the formal or informal sector. From the formal sector, Johnson (2015) opined that students acquire vocational skills from Business Education which is subdivided into Accounting skills, Office Management skills and marketing skills. In the technological education area, students are exposed to electronic/electrical technology trade, mechanical trade, wood-work trade, welding and fabrication, civil technology trades. In the Home Economics Education area, students are taught home management, clothing and textile, Food science and technology, etc. There are also Agricultural skills that students can learn from the

formal sector mostly in universities, polytechnics, and colleges of Education.

The level of insecurity in Nigeria in general and Niger Delta in particular is seriously getting out of hand. There is no single day in the Niger Delta region that issues of crimes and insecurities are not reported in the media. People's lives and properties are threatened. Their means of livelihood are usually cut-out due to the level of insecurity in the land. Farmlands are deserted as unemployment bites and food shortages are increasingly experienced by the populace. Furthermore, empirical works on vocational skill development and insecurity in Niger-Delta has been on the low. It is on the need to fill in this gap that this present study is undertaken.

Vocational skills are saleable skills that ensures that one gain a purposeful living out of it. Ido and Basse (2005) are of the opinion that vocational skills emanate from the rigorous training, education, learning and attitudes that they acquire either through training or through education. It involves the systematic process of acquiring a skill or group of skills that would definitely help the beneficiary to be gainfully employed.

Dandey (2014) opined that vocational skills development can be acquired through formal and informal level of education. This vocation skill can be sub-divided into industrial and technical skills, Business skills, Agricultural skills, Home Economic skills, Nursing skills etc. The technical and industrial skill involves skills that revolve around electrical/electronics, woodwork, architectural designs, auto-mobile technology, building and construction. The Business skills include skills in Accounting, skills in Auditing and Investigation, Taxation skills, Office management skills, Marketing skills, banking skills, financial management skills, etc.

In agricultural sub-skills, students can acquire skills in soil science, Agricultural Economics, Food production, Crop science, Zoology, etc. These skills can be acquired through formal and informal education. In the formal education, students can acquire these skills through learning in the secondary and tertiary institutions. Most Universities have faculties of vocational education, majority of the universities have department of Vocational Education with specialties in the different areas of vocational education.

With regards to vocational education training and skills development, people can acquire skills through apprenticeship, mentorship, and informal education. These are done in the different skills in vocational areas that would involve under-studying a particular boss who imparts the skill to the learner at different intervals and specifications for prompt acquisition of knowledge, attitude, and skills that would help provide basic things that would help provide jobs that would boost that basic economy of the South-South region.

Skill development can be defined as the process of acquiring a particular skill through education, training, skill transfer, and apprenticeship (Benson, 2015). Skill development can also be seen as the process through which an individual acquires a particular skill set that would help the student to be gainfully employed and be self-reliance.

Objectives of Skill Development

The core objectives of vocational skill development enhance employment generation, helps in the reduction of poverty, reduction of insecurity, promotes wealth creation, increases the rate of technical empowerment, helps in jobs creation, serves as Economic booster and Political stability.

II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between vocational skill development and the reduction of insecurity in Niger-Delta, South-South, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

- a) The relationship between Business skill development and reduction of insecurity in Niger-Delta.
- b) The relationship between technical skill development and reduction of insecurity in Niger delta.

III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following are research questions were asked to guide the study.

- a) What is the relationship between business skill development and reduction of insecurity in Niger-Delta?
- b) What is the relationship between technical skill development and reduction of insecurity in Niger-Delta?

IV. NULL HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

- H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between business skill development and reduction of insecurities in Nigeria.
- H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between technical skill development and Reduction of insecurity in Niger-Delta.

V. DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The correlational survey design was adopted for the study. The Design is appropriate because the researchers are interested in establishing relationship between two variables of interest through a researcher structured questionnaire (Usoro, 2016).

VI. POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population of this study consisted of 102 graduates of Vocational Education related disciplines in Federal Universities in Niger-Delta who are currently pursuing their Master and Doctoral degrees programmes.

VII. SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

A sample of 102 was selected through purposive sampling technique. That means there was no sample. The entire population was used.

VIII. INSTRUMENTATION

The researchers-developed structured questionnaire titled ‘‘Vocational Skill Development and Reduction of Insecurity Questionnaire’’ (VOSDRIQ) was used for the study.

IX. DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE

Pearson Product Moment Correlation(r) was used to answer the research questions and test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

X. RESULTS

A. Research Question 1

What is the relationship between Business skill development and reduction of insecurity in Niger-Delta?

TABLE I: PEARSON PRODUCT MOMENT CORRELATION(R) TESTING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BUSINESS SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND REDUCTION OF INSECURITY IN NIGERIA. N=102

Variables	$\sum X/\sum Y$	$\sum XY$	$\sum X^2/\sum Y^2$	R	Decision
Business skills(x)	321		2419		Positive Strong Relationship
		1584		0.71	
Reduction of Insecurity(y)	416		2658		

From the data analysis in Table I, it can be seen that ther-value of 0.71 shows a positive relationship between Business skills and reduction of insecurities.

B. Research Question 2

What is the relationship between technical skill development and reduction of insecurity in Niger-Delta?

TABLE II: PEARSON PRODUCT MOMENT CORRELATION(R) TESTING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TECHNICAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND REDUCTION OF INSECURITY IN NIGER-DELTA. N=102

Variables	$\sum X/\sum Y$	$\sum XY$	$\sum X^2/\sum Y^2$	R	Decision
Technical skills(x)	317		2788		Positive Strong Relationship
		3165		0.89	
Reduction of Insecurities(y)	416		2658		

From the data analysis in Table II, it can be seen that ther-value of 0.89 shows a positive strong relationship between technical skills development and reduction of insecurities in Niger-Delta.

C. Null Hypothesis 1

TABLE III: PEARSON PRODUCT MOMENT CORRELATION(R) TESTING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BUSINESS SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND REDUCTION OF INSECURITY IN NIGER-DELTA. N=102

Variables	$\sum X/\sum Y$	$\sum XY$	$\sum X^2/\sum Y^2$	Df	r-cal	r-crit	Decision
Business skill(x)	321		2419		0.71	0.195	S*
		1584		100			
Reduction of Insecurities(y)	416		2658				

S*=Significant at 0.05 alpha level, degree of freedom=100

From the data analysis in Table 3, it can be seen that the r-cal value of 0.71 was greater than the r-crit value of 0.195 degree of freedom of 100 and at 0.05 significance level. This implies that there is a significant relationship between business skills development and the reduction of insecurity in Niger-Delta.

D. Null Hypothesis 2

TABLE IV: PEARSON PRODUCT MOMENT CORRELATION(R) TESTING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TECHNICAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND REDUCTION OF INSECURITY IN NIGER-DELTA. N=102

Variables	$\sum X/\sum Y$	$\sum XY$	$\sum X^2/\sum Y^2$	DF	r-cal	r-crit	Decision
Technical skills(x)	317		2788		0.89	0.195	S*
		3165		100			
Reduction of Insecurity(y)	416		2658				

S*= Significant at 0.05 alpha level, degree of freedom=100

From the data analysis in Table 4, it can be seen that the r-cal value of 0.89 was greater than the r-critical value of 0.195, degree of freedom of 100 and at 0.05 significance level. This implies that there is a significant relationship between technical skills development and the reduction of insecurity in Niger-Delta.

E. Findings of the Study

The following are findings for the study.

1. There is a strong positive relationship between business skills development and the reduction of insecurity in Niger-Delta.
2. There is a strong positive relationship between technical skills development and the reduction of insecurity in Niger-Delta.
3. There is significant relationship between business skill development and the reduction of insecurity in Niger-Delta.
4. There is a significant relationship between technical skills and the reduction of insecurity in Niger-Delta.

XI. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

A. Business Skills Development and the Reduction of Insecurity in Niger-Delta

The data analysis on Tables I and III indicated that there exists a significant relationship between Business Skills Development and the reduction of Insecurity in Niger-Delta. This finding showed that students who acquire Business

Skills and tend to develop some usually do not emerge themselves in problems and cause breakdown to laws and orders. This business skill development when appreciated by many in the Niger-Delta zone. This finding is in consonance with the findings of Utteh (2014) who opined Business Skills development is a requisite for the reduction of insecurity in the country. Mboho (2015) opined that insecurity can be curbed through the aid of developing business skills. The business skills adopted by the study include negotiation skills, accounting skills, management skills, typing skills, management skills, etc. The study also corroborated with the findings of Kponomo (2018), who opined that insecurity is the absence of positive business skills among the youths of the region.

B. Technical Skills Development and the Reduction of Insecurity in Niger-Delta

The data analysis on Tables II and IV indicated that there exists a significant relationship between technical skills development and the reduction of insecurity in Niger-Delta region. The study had shown that majority of those with vocational skill are in the technical skills area. This is because the technical skills areas are wide and divide. They include but not limited to mechanical technology, road-side mechanic, roadside technicians, electricians, plumber, welder, building, phone repairs, etc.

They also have a greater impact on the lives of its beneficiaries. The study had also corroborated the findings of Benson (2014), who opined that technical education has a very long way in alleviating poverty and ensures that insecurity is fully tackled. The findings also agree with the findings of Ita (2015) who opined that technical skills development of graduates of Technical Education would go a long to stop anything that would breach their level of insecurity. He was of the opinion that technical skills should be given to young people to enable them to gainfully employ since the requisite for fighting insecurity in the country is employment opportunities.

XII. CONCLUSION

The study tried to relate vocational skills development to the reduction of insecurity in Niger-Delta. The study used the correlational survey design for the study. Questionnaires were used by the researchers to generate data for the study. The study indicated that there exists a strong positive relationship between vocational skills development and the reduction of insecurity in Niger-Delta region. The study had also shown that the vocational skills development of Business and Technical skills can help reduce insecurity in Niger-Delta.

XIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are the recommendations of the study:

1. Business skill development programmes should be encouraged to ensure that many youths are employed.
2. Technical services should be made free for all in order to discourage insecurity.

3. Government should improve on the funding of vocational education in Nigeria.
4. Vocational skills should be infused into the primary school curriculum to encourage the children to embrace skill acquisition at their formative age.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Authors declare that they do not have any conflict of interest.

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