

## **Effect of Regional Agitation for Resource Control on Human Capital Development: A Study of Niger Delta Region of Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

*The study focused on the effect of regional agitation for resource control on human capital development; with reference to Niger Delta Region of Nigeria. Specifically the study sought to ascertain the effect of regional agitation for resource control on human capital development in the delta rich region and the relationship between human capital development efforts of the federal government and the economic growth of the region. The researcher made use of survey research design, the sample size of the study consist of three hundred respondent randomly selected from oil producing communities in Abia, Akwa Ibom and Rivers State. Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis was used to analysed the data obtained from the field. The major findings revealed that; at  $P > 0.01$  level of significance, regional agitation for resource control has a strong positive effect on human capital development with correlation coefficient of ( $r = 0.927$ ). Furthermore, Longevity (LEI) and Educational Attainment Index (EAI) with the coefficient regression of (3062.534), and (1630.429), respectively are positively related to the human capital development efforts of the government at 1% level ( $\text{Sig} < .01$ ) of significance. While Standard of Living on Real per capital GDP (SLI) with the regression coefficient of (-5248.202) are negatively related to the human capital development efforts of the Government at 1% level ( $\text{Sig} < .05$ ,  $\text{Sig} < .01$ ) of significance. The researcher concluded that human capital development programmes are paramount for economic development of the delta rich region as it reflect stock of competencies, and thus, recommends that federal government should relied on sound human capital development programmes as a panacea to the under development and economic backwardness of the Niger Delta Region.*

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**Key words:** *Regional Agitation, Resource Control, and Human Capital Development.*

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### **Introduction**

Human capital plays a critical role in economic growth and poverty reduction. From a macroeconomic perspective, the accumulation of human capital improves labour productivity; facilitates technological innovations; increases returns to capital; and makes growth more sustainable, which, in turn, supports poverty reduction. Thus, human capital is regarded at the macro level as a key factor of production in the economy wide production function. From a microeconomic perspective, education increases the probability of being employed in the labour market and improves earnings capacity. Thus, at the micro level, human capital is considered the component of education that contributes to an individual's labour productivity and earnings while being an important component of firm production (Hyun, 2010). Therefore, investments in people are just as important, if not more important, than investments in the other regional

capitals. Hence, human capital in communities exists in the form of educational attainment, both formal and informal. There is great wealth in tapping into the skills, abilities, and knowledge of community members. Regions that have abundant human capital have people who value lifelong learning and who are always willing to try new ways of thinking and it is a prerequisite for economic development, but the Niger Delta Region is yet to attain this height.

There is a disconnection between the economic advantage of the Niger Delta and the quantum of resources disbursed for the development of the region. Niger Delta of Nigeria is increasingly famous due to massive oil deposits and constant violence in the region. Estimates show that the Nigerian government generates over 90% of its revenue from the region, which is characterised by crisis of underdevelopment (Ikein, 2009) and poor human capital development. The region remains underdeveloped despite the huge revenue it provides for the privileged social class including the public figures, public servants and beneficiaries from multinational oil corporations, while the majority of the people there battle against squalor occasioned by exploitative oil exploration, environmental degradation, climate change, inadequate infrastructure, unemployment lack of human capital development and poverty, (Akeem, 2010).

A major problem that appears intractable in Nigeria is escalation of violence especially as a result of the emergence of deadly militant groups in the Niger Delta since the 1990s. The most disturbing militant activities in the region include oil pipeline vandalisation, hostage taking, massacre and assassination. The realisation of the need to seek redress for several years of neglect, the quest for resource control and marginalisation of resource-endowed communities of the Niger Delta fuels the growth of youth militancy and a new wave of social movement in Nigeria.

There has been a general feeling of insecurity, which is exacerbated by the high level of poverty in the region. The region is the heartbeat of the Nigeria's economy; yet, its abundant natural wealth stands in stark contrast to its palpable underdevelopment. The high rate of unemployment among the youths has helped to drive and sustain high levels of violence and criminality throughout the delta region. When there is a perceived sense of injustice, driven by the large number of people living in poverty, achieving sustainable development becomes a problem. This is the situation in the Niger Delta region in Nigeria. Today, there is increasing spate of kidnapping, armed robbery, assassinations, politically motivated killings, bombing, high unemployment among the youths, corruption, and inequality in the distribution of resources. This has spurred formidable challenges to sustainable human capital development in the region, particularly as conflicts over resources tighten their often vicious grip, as years of regional agitation seemed not to have parallel relationship with the economic development of the region.

With this deplorable condition of the region being the reality of the day, the research explore the effect of regional agitation for resource control on human capital development and the relationship between human capital development efforts of the Government and the economic growth of the region.

### **Review of Related Literature**

Human Capital includes those attributes of individuals that contribute to their ability to earn a living, strengthen community, and otherwise contribute to community organizations, to their families, and to self-improvement (Flora *et al.*, 2004). Human capital refers to the ability and efficiency of people to transform raw materials and capital into goods and services, and the consensus is that these skills can be learned through the educational system. That said, human capital development is important for development for its intrinsic value as a development goal in

its own right, not only because of its instrumental value (Hyun, 2010). Folloni and Vittadini (2010), human capital refers to the acquired and useful abilities of all the inhabitants or members of the society. According to Lyakurwa (2007), human capital development has the capacity to enlarge people's choices and opportunities, improve healthy living through acquired skills and knowledge and eventually enhance growth in the nation's gross domestic product through increased productivity.

Thus, various proxy measures of human capital have been proposed in the empirical literature, such as literacy rates (Azariadis and Drazen 1990); school enrollment rates (Barro 1991, Mankiw *et al.* 1992); years of schooling (Barro and Lee 1996, 2001, and 2010; Cohen and Soto 2007); and test scores (Hanushek and Kimko 2000, Hanushek and Woessmann 2009). While the literacy rate, which measures the proportion of the population who can read and write, is an important measure of well-being, it does not measure the educational attainment or skill level of the workforce. On the other hand, school enrollment rate is a relevant metric only for school-age children and has little relevance for the workforce. Although years of schooling can reasonably capture the human capital stock of the workforce, this only reflects the quantity of human capital; it does not give an indication of the skill level of the workforce.

Human capital is the "accumulated stock of skills and talents, and it manifests itself in the educated and skilled workforce in the region" (Mathur, 1999). Human capital is at times measured in terms of persons-years of education and it can be increased through formal or informal education or training (Mathur, 1999). In this sense, human capital is not limited to formal education. It includes experience; practical learning that takes place on the job, as well as, non-traditional technical training regimens that enhance skill development (Davidsson and Honig, 2003). Human capital can have significant positive effects on economic development at the macroeconomic level in a number of ways.

### **The Link between Amnesty and Human Capital Development in Nigeria**

Human capital development is one of the seven points' agenda for the Vision 202020 designed by Yar' Adua, the president of Nigeria, who died in February 2010. The agenda include infrastructure, security, food supply, housing, employment and wealth creation. The late president granted amnesty to militants of the Niger Delta to create an atmosphere for lasting peace in the region. It is believed that the development of human capital is also necessary for the maintenance of peace in the region. On 16th June 2009, the president held a consultative meeting with the Governors of the Niger Delta to deliberate on the need for amnesty and disarmament of militants in the Niger Delta. The president also consulted the Council of State on 25th June 2009 to solicit further support for the proposed amnesty. These actions were followed by a nationwide broadcast on 25th June 2009, thereby encouraging all militants to embrace amnesty by militancy and surrendering their arms and ammunitions in preparation to meet training needs of the registered ex-militants.

Based on unanimous endorsement of the programme, the Presidential Panel on Amnesty and Disarmament of Militants in the Niger Delta was inaugurated with Godwin Osagie Abbe (Rtd Major General) as its chairperson. As a result, the amnesty agenda was divided into three broad phases. The first phase deals with disarmament and demobilization of militants, while the second and third phases accommodate rehabilitation and integration of ex-militants. The first phase has been implemented. As at 15th October 2009, about 15,260 militants have accepted amnesty and surrendered various types and quantities of arms and ammunition including communication gadgets, bullet-proof jackets, tear gas, rifles and cartridges (Abbe, 2009). Arrangements made for

the implantation of the second and third phases include issuance of identification cards, identification of skills acquisition/training needs, deployment to various rehabilitation centres, payments of stipends/feeding allowances. Four Rehabilitation Centres (two each in Aluu, Rivers State and Agbarho, Delta State) have been prepared to meet training needs of the registered ex-militants. These rehabilitation centres have capacity for 3,000 persons and as a result of this an attempt has been made to rehabilitate ex-militants in batches. Each batch is expected to spend four weeks in the rehabilitation programme, which entails reorientation, counseling and moral/spiritual regeneration of the ex-militants.

As argued by functionaries in the Ministry of Niger Delta, a survey of the career aspiration of the ex-militants shows a wide preference for about ten (10) sectors ranging from Oil/Gas, Maritime Services, Fabrication and Welding Technology, Exploration and Production and Processing Engineering. The projected duration of training ranges from 3 - 18 months and after their completion of training the ex-militants could choose between wage employment or self-employment. They could also decide to return to school for further education and be trained up to the university level at public expense through programmes to be organised and administered by the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs. A standard form to be completed by the ex-militants has been jointly designed by relevant agencies including the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) and the Small and Medium Scale Enterprises Development Association of Nigeria (SMEDAN for standardization).

The quality of human capital in Nigeria is presently low. Nigeria's human capital is underdeveloped as it ranked 151 out of 177 countries listed in the 2004 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)'s Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI is based on income per person, life expectancy, literacy and school enrolment (Upadhyay, 1994). In this regard, Nigeria's performance however remains poor. Nigeria is still ranked among the world's 30 least developed countries and this despite the country's rich endowment with natural and human resources. A major consequence of low Human Development in Nigeria is brain drain, which is not commensurate with brain gain. The correlates of brain drain were described by Oyesiku (2009) as follows: Let us now examine the particular case of Nigeria's lost generation and determine the reasons why Nigeria has suffered the perils and pain of brain drain. The key factors are civil strife, political instability, and economic problems such as capital flight, unemployment and poverty...During the oil boom of the 1970s, Nigeria joined OPEC and billions of dollars flowed into Nigeria. However, corruption and graft squandered the wealth and the Federal Government soon became the center of political struggle...Nigeria re-achieved democracy in 1999 when it elected Olusegun Obasanjo as the new President ending almost thirty years of military rule...Umaru Musa Yar' Adua, of the People's Democratic Party, came into power in the general election of 2007. These political, social and economic events have resulted in incredible pain from brain drain and the full impact places further development in Nigeria at peril.

The FGN has established various training centres for ex-militants in the Niger Delta. Prior to the adoption of amnesty programme in Nigeria, the major controversies in the country include many ethnic movements and calls for "National Conference" to resolve the crisis of underdevelopment (Mustapha, 1998; Nnoli, 1998). The impact of the amnesty programme on human capital development has not been established but some factors that can hinder its contributions to the development have been found. Considering the huge benefits that ex-militants derive from their activities, post amnesty strategies such as vocational skills development and employment creation may not be sufficient to eradicate militancy in the Niger Delta. According to Collier and

Hoeffler (2005), “Case studies as well as cross-country studies suggest that countries with an abundance of natural resources are more prone to violent conflict.”

These scholars specifically cited the case of the Niger Delta as shown below: ...in the Delta region of Nigeria, large-scale organized crime is "bunkering" (i.e., stealing) oil from pipelines to the scale of around \$1 billion per year, selling it in East Asia. There is obviously scope for this massive criminal activity to link with the political secessionists of the Delta region. Resources can motivate conflict, especially in the form of secessions. Secessionists not only claim ownership of the resources, they also claim that the national authorities are misusing the money--that it is being embezzled by distant elites. Perhaps the best defense against such secessionist pressures is to make the secessionists look greedy. To achieve this, national governments should probably link resource revenues to some basic social service such as primary education (Collier and Hoeffler, 2005).

The above illustration fits well with the situation that warrants an adoption of amnesty as a precondition for the development of the Niger Delta. It is believed that amnesty would create opportunities for youths to channel their energies for positively rewarding productive activities. However, the “resource curse” thesis with an assumption that resource-endowed communities are prone to violence and underdevelopment negates the motivation for the adoption of amnesty. It is noteworthy that human capital development could transcend amnesty. Experiences of several countries with abundant resources and remarkable records of socio-economic development are instructive for Nigeria. Typical examples of resource-endowed peaceful countries include Norway,

Denmark, Sweden, Canada, Australia, the USA and the United Kingdom. The relatively peaceful Norwegian society had relied on raw materials export and combined economic growth with an egalitarian distribution of income long before its discovery of petroleum (Cappelen and Mjøset, 2009). This case dispels the logic of resource curse, which currently spreads across Nigeria.

### **Economic Development and Peace in Niger Delta.**

The Niger Delta comprises mainly a dense mangrove rainforest located in the southern tip of Nigeria. Nine out of the country’s thirty- six states are found within this belt. The region’s oil, according to experts in the hydrocarbon industry, comprises well over 90% of the value of Nigeria’s total exports (Asuni 2009). Geologists and Geomorphologists have identified nine major deltas in the world. Unfortunately, the Niger Delta, which is one of the largest in the world, remains, one of Nigeria’s least developed regions. It is this perceived sense of manifest inequality and outright marginalization of the people of the region that has brought so much underdevelopment, poor living standards, agitation and armed conflict to the region. Why has the Niger Delta region become so prone to conflict and on the radar of the international community? Knowledgeable people date the conflict back to the late 1990s, when it became manifestly obvious to the people of the area that there was little or no political will to frontally address the developmental needs of the Niger Delta region. Previous efforts to develop the region are now generally agreed to be cosmetic by any measure of development, both in conceptual and policy implementation terms at all levels. To this end, oil- producing communities have sought to articulate and advance their interests, including the use of peaceful domestic demonstrations and representations, mobilization of international support, and violent disruption of the operations and installations of oil companies (Suberu; 1995), all in search of sustainable economic development and environmental remediation. By economic development, we mean the programmed promotion of more intensive and advanced economic activity through education,

improved tools and techniques, more available financing, better transportation facilities, and creation of new businesses ( Redman; 2005). Sustainable development should, therefore, translate into the availability of higher and appropriate technological devices to power economic activities. The conflict that is ravaging the Niger Delta region today could be attributed to stagnated development that has led to loss of hope among the people of the area. From the setting up of the Willink Commission (1958), the Niger Delta Basin Development Authority (1959), the Oil Mineral producing Areas Commission (1991), to the current Niger Delta Development Commission (2000), the people of the area have not seen any tangible development that can change their sordid situation in what they perceive is the most backward delta in the world- the Niger Delta.

### **Human Capital Development.**

One of the major causes of prevailing spate of violence in the Niger Delta region arises from the gross underdevelopment of the area over time. Chaturvedi (2006) defines development as a process of social, economic and political change. Human capital reflects the value of our human capacities. Like any other type of capital, it could be invested in through education, training and enhanced benefits that will lead to an improvement in the quality and level of production. Specifically, it is the stock of competencies, knowledge, social and personality attributes, including creativity, embodied in the ability to perform a given task in order to produce economic value. No economy can succeed without having a sound and competent workforce. Developing human capital therefore, requires creating and cultivating environments in which human beings can rapidly learn and apply new ideas, competencies, skills, behaviour and attitudes. Unfortunately, the Nigerian government, including the multinational corporations operating in the region has failed to pay adequate attention to human capital development. The problem of Nigeria appears to linger largely on how to administer the economic and social processes that lead to positive changes. This is a continuous process of formulation, re-evaluation and implementation of set goals in a prescribed period. The over- centralization of power in a federal system has contributed immensely to the frustration and violence that currently rules the behaviour of youths in the Niger Delta region. In Federal system of governance, decentralization of power, authority and responsibility allows for the integration of the component units of the federating units to feel a sense of belonging. Decentralization involves reassigning decision-making responsibilities on a geographical basis to field service operational units. It may also involve reassignment of tasks based on subject-matter specialization (Chaturvedi, 2006) When government is distanced from the people, it is meant to serve, the situation results in alienation, suspicion, unemployment agitation and violence as we have in the Niger Delta today. The youths of the area must have hope of a secure future in the form of creation of jobs, training and re-training, programmers, and diversification of the sources of revenue to develop the region. On the vexing issue of employment, the youths of the Niger Delta are genuinely frustrated that people are taking jobs meant for them, thus fueling anger and instigating violence, kidnapping and general insecurity.

### **The Human Development Situation in the Niger Delta**

The Niger Delta region includes all nine oil-producing states in Nigeria (Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo and Rivers states) with a total land area of about 75,000 square kilometres and 185 local government areas. The region contains the world's third largest wetland, with the most extensive freshwater swamp forest and rich biological diversity.

Over half of the area is crisscrossed with creeks and dotted with small islands, while the remainder is a lowland rainforest zone (UNDP 2006).

A further disaggregation of the HDI score at the local government level in the Niger Delta clearly shows that regional and state scores mask inequalities in human development among oil-producing communities. In spite of the efforts of oil companies to enhance the well-being of the communities where they operate through several development initiatives, particularly in social infrastructure, there is still wide disparity in the performances of local government areas. The report discovers that most of the best performing local government areas on the HDI are the urban ones, while the majority of the poorly performing ones are those based in rural areas. The local government areas without oil facilities appear to fare better on the poverty index than those with oil facilities; an indication of unequal distribution of oil revenues. The poor outcomes of development interventions of oil companies are, to some extent, due to lack of a systematic link to government development plans (UNDP 2006).

### **Human Capital Theory**

The origin of human capital goes back to emergence of classical economics in (1776) and thereafter developed a scientific theory. The idea of investing in human capital was first developed by Adam (1776), who argued in the Wealth of Nations that differences between the ways of working of individuals with different levels of education and training reflected differences in the returns necessary to defray the costs of acquiring those skills. Economists such as Elliot (1991) developed the theory of human capital. He is concerned with human capital in terms of the quality, not quantity, of the labour supply. After the manifestation of that concept as a theory, Schultz (1961) recognized the human capital as one of the important factors of national economic growth in the modern economy, (Dae-bong, 2009).

The theory argues that a person's formal education determines his or her earning power. Human capital theory holds that it is the key competences, skills, knowledge and abilities of the workforce that contributes to organisations competitive advantage. It focuses attention on resourcing, human resource development, and reward strategies and practices. According to Human Capital Theory, education is an investment because it is believed that it could potentially bestow private and social benefits. Human capital theorists believe that education and earning power are correlated, which means, theoretically, that the more education one has, the more one can earn, and that the skills, knowledge and abilities that education provides can be transferred into the work in terms of productivity, (Dae-bong, 2009).

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Area of the Study**

Survey research design was used in conducting the research. The study was conducted in the Niger Delta region, which includes all nine oil-producing states in Nigeria (Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo and Rivers States) with a total land area of about 75,000 square kilometres and 185 local government areas. The region contains the world's third largest wetland, with the most extensive freshwater swamp forest and rich biological diversity. Over half of the area is crisscrossed with creeks and dotted with small islands, while the remainder is a lowland rainforest zone. But for proximity, the researcher covered only the oil producing communities in Abia, Akwa Ibom and Rivers State.

### Sampling Techniques

This study adopted simple random sampling techniques. Randomly, hundred respondents were selected from the oil producing communities in the three different states (Abia, Akwa Ibom and Rivers State). Thus the sample size is three hundred respondents.

### Method of Data collection

The researcher made uses of both primary data and secondary sources data, the primary data were obtained through well structure questionnaire of close ended type which was administered to the respondent in the study area, interview and personal observation was also used. While secondary data were sourced through textbooks, journals, magazines, and other relevant internet materials.

### Method of Data Analysis

Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was use to analyse the effect of regional agitation for resource control on human capital development. Regional agitation was captured using dummy variable while human capital development was captured using persons' years of education, whether formal or informal education or training. Multiple Regression Analysis was used to analysed the relationship between human capital development efforts of the Government and the economic growth of the region. Human capital development efforts of the Government was captured using money spent on amnesty programmes from 2009 to 2015, while economic development of the region was captured using Human Development Index (HDI) which involves Longevity (LEI), Educational Attainment Index (EAI) Standard of Living on Real per capital GDP (SLI). The three indices is express as  $HDI = (1/3) (LEI + EAI + SLI)$ . From the three hundred (300) questionnaire sampled, two hundred and seventy five was returned well filled which form the bases for the data analysis.

### Result and Discursion

**Table 1**, showing Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis result on the effect of regional agitation for resource control on human capital development.

Variable	Correlation Coefficient	t- value
Human Capital Development	0.924	0.927**
<b>N</b>	<b>275</b>	
<b>P – Value</b>	<b>0.000</b>	

Source: field survey 2016

\*\* Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The correlation analysis result in Table 1 indicated that at  $P > 0.01$  level of significance, regional agitation for resource control has a strong positive effect on human capital development with correlation coefficient of ( $r = 0.927$ ). Signifying that regional agitation over resource control (the use of peaceful domestic demonstrations and representations, mobilization of international support, and violent disruption of the operations and installations of oil companies) impact negatively on their social, economic and political change, technological innovations; increases returns to capital, their level of education, training and enhanced benefits that will lead to an improvement in the quality and level of production in order to produce economic value which will in turn, supports poverty reduction. Thus, regional agitation negatively affect human capital development which erode economic development in the region.



This finding is in consonant with the position of Letam and Don, (2013) who opined that the conflict ravaging the Niger Delta region today could be attributed to stagnated development that has led to loss of hope among the people of the area. From the setting up of the Willink Commission (1958), the Niger Delta Basin Development Authority (1959), the Oil Mineral producing Areas Commission (1991), to the current Niger Delta Development Commission (2000), the people of the area have not seen any tangible development that can change their sordid situation in what they perceive is the most backward delta in the world- the Niger Delta.

**Table 2**, showing Multiple Regression result on the relationship between human capital development efforts of the Government and the economic growth in of the region.

Variables	Linear	Exponential	Semi Log	Double Log
Longevity (LEI)	3062.534 (0.000)***	8232.081 (0.000)***	1.926 (0.000)***	0.716 (0.000)***
Educational Attainment Index (EAI)	1630.429 (0.000)***	3435.248 (0.000)***	0.815 (0.000)***	0.386 (0.000)***
Standard of Living on Real per capital GDP (SLI)	-1461.960 (0.001)***	-1883.562 (0.002)***	-0.483 (0.001)***	-0.372 (0.000)***
Constant	-5248.202 (0.000)**	-5663.914 (0.000)***	6.014 (0.000)***	6.139 (0.000)**
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	58	58	59	59
<b>R</b>	58	58	58	58
<b>F</b>	126.944	127.310	131.256	34.766

Source: field survey 2016

\*Keys: \*\*\* = Significant at 1% level, \*\* = Significant at 5% level, \* = Significant at 10% level.

The Result in Table 2 showed the relationship between human capital development efforts of the Government and the economic growth in of the region. Using Linear as the lead equation, because Linear has the best good fit in the model among the other equations. The result revealed that Longevity (LEI) and Educational Attainment Index (EAI) with the coefficient regression of (3062.534), and (1630.429), respectively are positively related to the human capital development efforts of the Government in the selected states of Niger Delta Region, at 1% level (Sig < .01) of significance. While Standard of Living on Real per capital GDP (SLI) with the regression coefficient of (-5248.202) are negatively related to the human capital development efforts of the Government in the selected states of Niger Delta Region at 1% level (Sig < .05, Sig < .01) of significance.

The **R- square** which shows the proportion of variation in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables revealed that 58% of the variation was explained by the model. While the **Adjusted R** shows the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables, which revealed that 58% of the variance was also explained by the model. The **F-ratio** (126.944) is significant at 1% level, showing that the dependent variable in the model can be explained by the independent variable.

The regression result portrayed that the money spend by the Federal Government in promoting the health and educational standard of the Niger Delta region are having significant impact on the people as their Longevity (LEI) and Educational Attainment Index (EAI) is positively related to the human capital development efforts of the Federal Government in the region. While the Standard of Living on Real per capital GDP (SLI) of the Niger Delta region is very poor and

does not account for government investment in the region, as the result showed that it is significant but negatively related to the human capital development efforts of the Federal Government in region. Thus, from the result the human capital development effort of the federal government in the region is positively impacting on the educational attainment index of the region, signifying that as human capital development efforts of the federal government increases in the region, the educational attainment index of the region increases. The situation present a paradox because the educational attainment index of the region that increases does not transform into economic development of the region in harmony with the theory of human capital development which stipulates that human capital development transformed to national economic growth in the modern economy as posited Schultz (1961) cited in Dae-bong, (2009).

The finding is in harmony with the work of Akuodu (2011), who opined that the federal governments' developmental programmes in the delta rich region had rather served a palliative purpose and never lived up to public expectation. According to him, the administration of these interventionist schemes has deeply polarized the region into insignificant and sometimes dangerously opposing camps and has largely served the myopic interest of a privileged elite class and the sharp practices of sectionalism, favoritism, ethnicism, tribalism, bribery, embezzlement and outright corruption of the machinery of government in such programmes at different times had not help significantly in attaining development, rather it has helped to bring to fore the level of impoverishment in the region.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Human capital development programmes are paramount for economic development of the delta rich region as it reflect the stock of competencies, knowledge, social and personality attributes, including creativity, embodied in the ability to perform a given task for economic value and are essential for the improvement in the quality and level of production in the region. Thus the federal government should relied on sound human capital development programmes as a panacea to the under development and economic backwardness of the Niger Delta Region. The need for the region to shorn the social vices that characterised their regional agitation for resource control is essential because its prerogative for effective implementation of the human capital development effort of the federal government as the result revealed. Furthermore, federal government should not relent in their effort to reposition the economy of the delta rich region through adequate administration of human capital development programmes as it is a prerequisite for improving longevity and educational attainment index as revealed by the result.

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