

## **High Education Access and the Citizens of the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This research was carried out to investigate the access of the citizens of the Niger delta region into high education. Two questions were raised to act as a Guide in conducting the investigation in which it was found out that the level of provision of requirements in the Niger Delta region was low. Instrument of questionnaire was applied in gathering the data for the study. Findings were made which included that the supply of access to high institutions of learning was low. Based on the findings, conclusion in this investigation was arrived at that the supply of access to high institutions of learning was low. Thus It was proffered that federal government of Nigeria should produce a mechanism to ensure adequate supply of high institution of learning in Niger delta region as well as ensure that all factors which inhibit educational provisions are eliminated.*

**Keywords:** High Access, Education, Citizen

### **INTRODUCTION**

It is common knowledge that until quite recently that the Niger delta region of Nigeria did not know peace. Therefore the individuals who lived in the region were generally troubled. This is assumed to be as a result of inadequate educational facilities for the school age groups especially the high institution

As at 2009, educational statistics placed it that universities had grown to 103 from 5 in 1962 in Nigeria. The correspondent figure of increase in the admission is a reflection that the country had witnessed considerable access into the universities.

### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

It is often speculated that a society with little or no education is a society with little or no potential for development. Several individuals and corporate bodies tend to complain that the federal government of Nigeria and the state governments of the Niger Delta region have not cared to provide education for the citizens in the region especially the high level of education. It has been argued by education experts and non-experts in the field of education that the Nigerian state appears unfair in the treatment of the Niger Delta region educationally.

The argument is amplified with complain that in spite of the fact that the funds with which the Nigerian nation sustains itself is generated mainly for the Niger Delta region yet the federal and state governments do not bother about what happens to the citizens of the region. This is strengthened with the cry that the citizens who are school age are not provided for fairly or adequately. For example, it is stated that out of the 103 universities established in county as at 2009, not more than 18 of them are located in the Niger Delta region.

It is believed by analysts that the little or no education given to the citizens of the Niger Delta region seems to be the umbrella under which the violent activities in the region are planned

and carried out. According to the analysts the violent experience in the Niger Delta region has been horrible and difficult to live with. And all these have been carried out by children and youths who have no reasonable means of livelihood they argue.

It is often stated that education is the panacea to most human problems where it is available and adequately supplied to meet the demand by the citizens. According to comments made by citizens of the region the youth and the general public of the region seem to suffer the double tragedy of non development and the associated consequences of joblessness, in other words the society lacks the ability to realize their needs, such as product and services, as well as the educational facilities which ought to ensure access of youths into institutions of learning.

Some individuals also abound in the county of Nigeria particularly outside the Niger Delta region whose claim is that the citizens of Niger Delta region seem to be lazy in carrying on with rewarding tasks that have elements of some difficulties. They argue that the problem faced by the citizens of Niger Delta region is the desire of the citizens to occupy positions of organizational management but with high disregard for non-managerial duties as well as other junior staff positions in spite of the fact that they may not have the relevant qualifications.

It is argued further by the analysts that the children and youths of Niger Delta region do carry their attitude of laziness into their educational pursuit. That otherwise the federal and their state governments are always eagerly prepared to provide them adequately with all their educational requirements.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Thus above problem amplified by arguments, complaints, etc. clearly demonstrated that the provision of education to the citizens in the Niger Delta region required to be investigated. As a result, two questions were raised to act as a guide in the investigation as follows:

1. Do governments provide adequate educational requirements in the Niger Delta region for the training of individuals in the region?
2. Are there parentals hindering education provision in the Niger Delta region?

It is a fact that imbalance in provision of educational facilities creates disadvantages among learners in societies. Thus, Obielumani (2008) and Okobia (2002) assert that educational distribution has not been fairly managed by the federal government of Nigeria over the years. The authors reported that school enrolments favored Northern Nigeria to the disadvantage of South especially the Niger Delta region where very low numbers of females were recorded for admission into the high institutions comparatively during their studies.

Arubayi and Ikoya (2009) also found that there was disparity in the distribution of high institutions of learning between the Delta and the regions of Nigeria. Hence according to their finding there were high limitations in access of citizens of Niger Delta region into universities and other high institutions of learning.

It is however noteworthy to observe the claim by Negash, Olusola and Colucci (2011) who found that most universities they studied stated that their priority was widening access to accommodate students. They stated that the group consists of learners from economic poor background, ethnic / cultural minority region, gender disparity, physical disability among others.

There appears to be calls from all and sundry that all the categories of women within the labor market bracket should adequately be provided for to ensure greater impact of human

resources on development in respective societies. Accordingly UNICEF and UNESCO (2005) assert that educating is not only a right but also an opportunity to participate in the social, economic, political and cultural advancement of the millennium. O'Donnell (1988) disagrees with this view as he claims that the Nigerian culture does not allow women to be trained to share equality with men.

Education serves an important role in the pursuit of progress and development in the lives and times of individuals and societies. Hence the government of Great Britain agrees with Little (1981) when the author claimed that all the groups of individuals including the immigrant communities in the British society deserve adequate education to enable them contribute meaningfully to their well-fair and society development. This is what World Bank (1994:16) refers to as it explains that “equity enters where legitimate demand is denied supply.”

**METHODOLOGY OF INVESTIGATION**

**Sample and Sampling Technique**

Sample size of the study was 4500 subjects, consisted of 2300 males and 2300 females. The sample was drawn among educational administrators, student’s applicant/unemployed individuals, employers of labour (public organizations), entrepreneurs, employees, etc.

Simple random sampling technique was used. A total of 9 public and 3 private universities, 5 polytechnic and 6 colleges of education where included in the study. All the subject of the sample where drawn from the 9 states of the Niger delta region.

**Instrument of the study**

The study was conducted with the aid of questionnaire in gathering the relevant data from the sample subjects the instrument was administered by the researcher and research assistants. The data gathered where subjected to necessary treatment of sorting and statistical tool of percentage application for analysis as follows

**Question 1**

1. Do governments provide adequate educational requirements in the Niger Delta region for the training of individuals in the region?

**Table 1. Provision of educational requirements per government**

<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Requirement Provisions level</i>		
	<i>High level</i>	<i>Low level</i>	<i>Total</i>
School administrators	230 5.11%	470 10.44%	700 20.55%
Student	250 5.56%	280 6.22%	530 11.78%
Unemployed individuals	120 2.67%	560 12.44%	680 12.44 %
Public employers	210 4.84%	480 10.67%	690 15.51 %
Entrepreneurs’	360 8.00%	680 15.11%	1040 23.11 %
Employees	240 5.33%	620 13.78%	860 19.11 %

## Question 2

Are there parentals hindering education growths in the Niger Delta region?

**Table 2. parentals and hindering educational provisions**

<i>Parentals</i>	<i>Hindering Level Assessment</i>		
	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Total</i>
Government rolls	3450 76.67	1050 23.33	4500 100%
Funding	3720 82.67	780 17.33	4500 100%
Management	3200 71.11	1300 28.89	4500 100%
Provision of facilities	3190 70.88	1310 29.11	4500 100%
Institutional disparity	3280 72.89	1220 27.11	4500 100%
Enrollment in balance	3620 80.44	880 19.56	4500 100%

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The data for the study were sorted out and analyzed on tables one and two above. The data on table one revealed that all the groups of individuals who responded to the question raised indicated that the level of provisions requirements in the data region was low. This finding is supported by Arubayi and Ikoya (2009) whose finding was that there was disparity in the distribution of higher institution learning between the Niger regions of Nigeria. The effect of this is highlighted by UNICEF and UNESCO 2005 as the world bodies assert that education is not only a right but a means for individuals' contributions to national economic, social, political and cultural development.

Table 11 also revealed that there are parentals that hinder educational provisions in Niger delta region. This assertion is made based on the indication on the table where the analysis of the data showed that all the parentals studied through the question if [there are parentals hindering education provision in the Niger delta region] were responded to in the affirmative this finding is confirmed by Obielumani (2008) and Okobia (2002) who assert that the level of provisions of educational requirement has influence on the educational achievement of the citizens.

The implication of the finding on table 11 is an indication that the citizens of the Niger delta region of Nigeria are denied adequate access to high education the effect of which is seeming laziness, none productivity, moody characteristics leading to destructive tendencies, etc. What this finding reveals is that the youth of the Niger delta region need to be mobilized educationally in respective of the a gender. Although this view runs contrary to O'Donnell who stated that the cultural hindrance of female gender is a phenomenon which Nigeria has agreed to take on itself, Little (1981) and World Bank (1994) raised the view that education should be provided for all citizens irrespective of where they come from or their socio-cultural economic back ground

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings above, the conclusion arrived at in this study was that the supply of access to high institutions of learning is low. This conclusion is made more assertive with the

finding that besides the limited number of institutions in the Niger delta region many other factors are operating as hindrance to educational activities in the region.

Based on the findings and the conclusion in this investigation it was proffered that federal government of Nigeria should produce a mechanism to ensure adequate supply of high institution of learning in Niger delta region as well as ensure that all factors which inhibit educational provisions are eliminated.

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